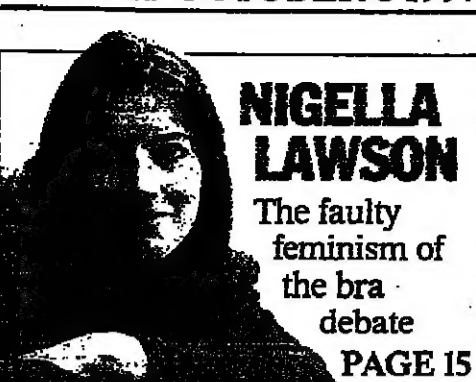




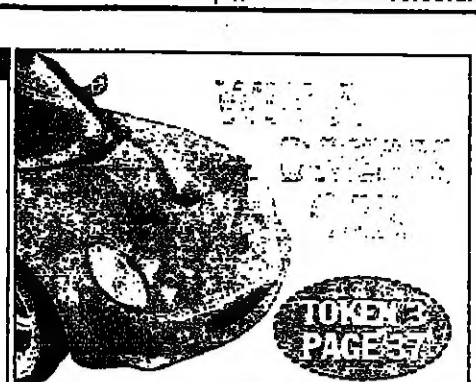
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Scientists use human cells to grow spare parts for body

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A PIONEERING method of growing body tissue will soon make it possible to produce an almost complete range of body spare parts for transplants.

The technique, known as tissue engineering, has already produced skin grafts, but is now being used to grow bone, cartilage and ligament. The same method can be used to build livers and heart muscle.

"This is not science fiction," said Gail Naughton, one of the pioneers of the process. "Now we have worked out the technology, there is no limit to what we can do."

Ms Naughton, whose company in San Diego, California, has led the research into tissue engineering, said yesterday she expected trials to start within nine months in Britain and the United States on transplanted knee joints.

"This will have enormous advantages for sportsmen who can be put out of action by a serious injury for a very long time," she said. "We have already successfully transplanted such joints into sheep and rabbits and there is no reason now why we cannot do the same for humans."

Tissue engineering involves using an incubator to recreate the conditions of a womb, which allows cells to grow naturally to any shape and size on to a framework made of biodegradable threads. This was the technique used recently to grow a human ear shape on to a mouse in a laboratory experiment.

"Transplant surgery has made enormous advances in recent years and the only real limitation is the availability of donors," Ms Naughton said. "With this process we can create all the tissue needed and know that it is safe."

Those receiving a transplant would not donate their own tissue because this would need to be grown for several weeks before it could be used and would, in any case, probably not be as healthy as that which had been grown in the incubator.

As the spare part is living tissue, it grows with the body after a transplant.

This means, for example, that a hip replacement will fuse naturally into place, unlike artificial joints made of plastic and metal, which have to be pinned or glued.

Another potential use would be in surgery on faces badly disfigured by road accidents. Bone tissue cut precisely to the right shape can be built into cheeks and jaws to restore the shape of a victim's face.

The first tissue-engineered product available is a skin graft developed to help diabetic sufferers who develop foot ulcers that refuse to heal and which can lead to amputation. Successful trials in Britain and America have shown that it is a quicker, cheaper and more certain cure than any conventional treatment for these ulcers.



The pioneer, page 2

Leader endorsed by 80% of members

Hague slaps down Tory 'dinosaurs'

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

WILLIAM HAGUE exerted his new authority over the Conservative Party last night by slapping down two Tory veterans over controversial remarks at conference fringe meetings.

Hours after his overwhelming endorsement as party leader, Mr Hague demonstrated his determination to impose discipline by disowning Lord Tebbit for speaking out against a multicultural society and criticising Alan Clark for saying that the only way to deal with the IRA was to kill 600 people in one night.

A source close to the Tory leader described the two former ministers as "dinosaurs on the rampage" while Lord Parkinson, the party chairman, publicly denounced his erstwhile colleagues. He disagreed with Lord Tebbit, saying: "We do live in a multicultural society and we seem to be getting on well," and he described Mr Clark's remarks as wrong-headed, offensive and out of court.

Lord Tebbit had told a fringe meeting: "Multiculturalism is divisive. One cannot uphold two sets of ethics or be loyal to two nations, any more than a man can have two masters. It perpetuates ethnic divisions because nationality is more about culture than ethnicity. Youngsters born here should be taught that British history is their history, or they will forever be foreigners holding British passports and this kingdom will become a Yugoslavia."

But Mr Hague's officials denounced the speech, saying: "William Hague wants to build a multicultural society. Norman Tebbit has his views. They are not the views of the leadership. Tebbit gives the impression of intolerance. William is all about tolerance — as his speech showed today." Mr Hague's address had included a call for "patriotism without bigotry" and an appeal for more blacks and Asians to join the party.

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Mr Clark's gaffe came during a question-and-answer session in which he was asked how to deal with the IRA. He replied: "The only solution is to kill 600 people in one night — let the UN and Bill Clinton and everyone else make a scene — and it is over for 20 years." He prefaced his remarks by saying that everyone knew his view, but Mr Hague's spokesman said the comments were "unhelpful and unconstructive, especially given the part played by the Conservative Government in the peace process."

The no-nonsense line taken against the former ministers was in tune with events on the opening day of the Blackpool conference, where speakers were applauded when they blamed divisions and arrogance for the party's worst election defeat.

John Major — who was given a hero's welcome — suggested that MPs divided views, expressed without restraint, "made our positions impossible". He emphasised the importance of the party pulling together behind the new leader and promised: "I'm backing William. I'm backing him because he's an able man of talent and integrity with a tough job ahead."

He even got away with an apparent sideswipe at Baroness Thatcher when he added: "I propose to give William Hague the unqualified support — in public and in private — that he has a right to expect from his predecessor."

Gillian Shephard, too, was cheered when she said that Tory supporters felt that too often they had been let down

by people in the parliamentary party. Mr Hague himself said that the Tories had lost, in part, because the parliamentary party came to be seen as divided, arrogant, selfish and conceited.

Mr Hague, who had won the ballot endorsing his leadership and the principle of party reforms with more than 80 per cent support, pleased the conference with a forceful, frank and assured speech. Many who had never seen him speak before were pleasantly surprised.

He said that he had no illusions about the mammoth task ahead, but he pledged to do everything in his power to rebuild the party — not for himself, the MPs, or even the activists — but for the millions in Britain who shared Tory values and needed a united and strong Tory party.

"This is the week when we draw a line in the sand," he said. "The week when we stop apologising. The week when we get up off our knees and stand tall again. This is the week when the whole world will see that the Conservatives are back in business."

Once again echoing the Blairite reforms in the Labour Party, Mr Hague said that reform and modernisation would be the foundations of his leadership and that was why the two issues had been linked in the ballot. Just over 180,000 members voted in that ballot, with 143,000 backing Mr Hague, who pronounced himself well pleased with the outcome — although more than 100,000 members did not vote.

Mr Hague will now hold six months of consultations on his "green paper" entitled *Blueprints for Change*. Under his proposals, all wings of the party would be united under a new constitution, and after the sleaze rows of recent years, an ethics committee would be set up to investigate and discipline those who brought the party into disrepute.



The Queen, wearing socks in deference to Muslim practice, at the Faisal Mosque

The Queen puts on navy socks for pomp and prayer

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN ISLAMABAD

THE Queen paid tribute last night to Diana, Princess of Wales, telling a state banquet on the first day of her state visit to Pakistan that it had been "a source of comfort and strength to know that people round the world have shared our grief at Diana's tragic, early death."

She added: "On behalf of the British nation I thank you, and all the people of Pakistan, for the sympathy and feeling you have shown." She commended the Princess's work in Pakistan, which she visited as a government guest and unofficially to see the Lahore cancer hospital started by Imran Khan, the former Pakistani cricket captain.

The Queen's comments in a brief speech at the Presidential Palace added an emotional note to a day of formality and protocol.

In a canary yellow suit and navy blue socks and carrying a white handbag, she entered the echoing vastness of the Faisal Mosque to view one of the many architectural masterpieces of this small, almost comatose, city.

The mosque, the main prayer hall of which can accommodate 10,000 people, is one of the world's largest, as the Queen might have realised as

she padded through some of its vast marble porticos and verandas.

It is unusual for women to enter mosques in Pakistan. The Queen was escorted into a gap between prayers and was required to remove her shoes, donning what looked suspiciously like British Airways-issue woolly footwear.

But it provided a gentle beginning to a week of engagements as part of celebrations marking the country's 50th birthday. It was a day of military bands, award ceremonies and formal meetings. It passed without her meeting anybody but dignitaries, save for the children of staff at the British High Commission, who let out two welcoming yells.

The Queen encountered pictures of herself and the Duke of Edinburgh painted all over a truck parked at the High Commissioner's residence — an example of truck art which turns lorries into gaudy chariots that fly blindly along Pakistan's maniacal highways. This particular specimen will soon be back hauling goats and grain, possibly "By Appointment".

President Farooq Leghari told the Queen her visit was the "high point" of Pakistan's celebrations. In truth, Pakistan is too broke to provide lavish events for its 130 million people. A quarter of its budget is earmarked for defence and almost half for debt servicing.

Before an exchange of awards a mullah recited a prayer, which was repeated in English, in which he spoke of the need for forgiveness and declaring that "whatever is given here is but a convenience in this life". For several moments the Queen held her hands in her lap and looked down, her eyes closed.

A Hollywood film company announced yesterday it has bought the rights to use Diana, Princess of Wales's words from Andrew Morton's new bestseller to make a film about her marriage break-up.

This latest deal involving the taped interviews made by the Princess brought condemnation from her family. Her brother, Earl Spencer, was said to be upset that an actress will use the Princess's words. He will ask lawyers if he can stop the film using the transcripts.

Oxbridge could be facing extinction

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

AN apocalyptic vision of the demise of Britain's top universities was painted by Oxford's vice-chancellor yesterday in a searing attack on the Government's higher education spending review.

Dr Peter North issued a warning that cutting the £35 million that now supports the college system at Oxford and

Cambridge would "destroy their competitive position on the world scene".

Many talented academics would lose their jobs, world-famous historical collections would be jeopardised, and the standards of teaching and research would suffer, he said.

Oxford has gone on the offensive in the wake of leaks suggesting that ministers believe the extra public money for Oxford and Cambridge is "increasingly difficult to defend". The funding, equivalent to nearly £2,000 for each student every year, preserves the college system, which ensures one-to-one tutorial teaching, whereas students at other universities are taught in large groups.

On Monday, Brian Pender, chief executive of the Higher Education Funding Council, visited Oxford to begin confidential talks with the two universities on the future of college fees. His visit came in response to Sir Ron Dearing's report on higher education in July, which called for a review of the £35 million college fees to see if this "substantial addition to standard funding" represented "a good use of resources".

Dr North, in his last oration before retiring as vice-chancellor, continued on page 2, col 3

Bungle delays £2 coin launch

The Royal Mint has been forced to put back the launch of the new £2 coin because of a mismatch between the coin and the prototype used to reset millions of vending machines. Businesses have spent about £20 million preparing machines to accept the coin, which was due to go into circulation on November 3.

Shadow on talks

The first full-scale peace negotiations involving Unionists, nationalists, loyalists and republicans at Stormont yesterday was overshadowed by the resignation of Ray Burke, the Irish Foreign Minister, and diminished by the absence of the Ulster Unionist Party's leaders.

Inflation shock

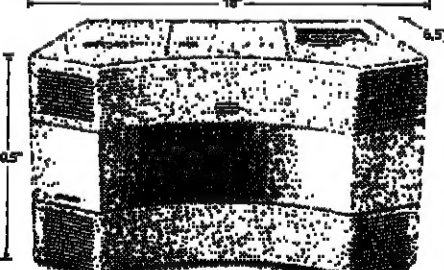
A surprise rise in the headline rate of inflation to 3.6 per cent in September from 3.5 per cent in August will add extra costs to the social security budget next year and could jeopardise the Government's spending plans.

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Faithful few fight blithely on amid debris of defeat

SECURITY for this Tory Party conference has been much reduced. Nobody even wants to kill them anymore. Quoting Isaiah, the Vicar of St John the Evangelist gave it to them straight. "A voice cries in the wilderness," he declared. Conservative representatives at prayer in Blackpool's Winter Gardens at the start of the conference yesterday knew just what he meant.

They sang "Through many a day of darkness/Through many a scene of strife/The faithful few fought bravely/To guard the nation's life." The faithful few, gathered for mutual comfort and support, were conscious that the days of darkness are still upon them.

What do you say to such a congregation? "Rise up on eagles' wings!" continued the vicar. A thousand Tory faces were uplifted to the Bald Eagle himself, their new leader. Could he do it? Were his wings strong enough?

William Hague tried a preliminary flutter before lunch. If he did not exactly soar, he hovered successfully for about 20 minutes — a feat that was the more impressive for following an introduction from Lord Parkinson. After listing



Mr Hague's virtues, the party chairman had planned to end his speech — to wild applause — with a ringing call: "From Oxbridge to Uxbridge, Hague's the right man for the job!"

He delivered this plonker as scripted, and waited for applause. There was complete silence. "You're supposed to clap," yelled Parkinson, and scuttled back to his seat. But it was not really Parkinson's fault. There is something chilling about the Tories' stage set. The lower they sink, the more monumental becomes their backdrop. Constructed from a quantity of fuzzyfelt sufficient to upholster ten battalions of Teletubbies, the set rises behind the podium in a line of 20ft shark's fins, dwarfing the platform party. The effect is of indescribable menace.

In the middle of the fins

hovers what appears to be an enormous illuminated biscuit in partial eclipse. The whole thing is lit in the sort of pastel blues and pinks you might consider for a new bidet. The overall effect is *The Nine O'Clock News* meets *Sea World*.

Emerging from such a backdrop, William Hague did well to fake his audience's spirits. In what was, by the evangelical standards of the hour, an unshowy and old-fashioned speech delivered with relaxed good humour, the new leader steadied nerves a little. He was received with something better

than acquiescence and something less than rapture. John Major spoke movingly and was greeted with the demoted acclaim the Tory tribe traditionally reserves for those whom it has comprehensively shredded.

In or out of power, there is a certain continuity about Conservative conferences. Those who doubted as much will have been reassured by the sight of Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman. The Morris Minor-driving former MP for Lancaster was sitting in the position she always occupies, at the front.

Dame Elaine, who is 73,

NEWS IN BRIEF

1,300 jobs to go at migration offices

A plan to cut jobs by half at the immigration service offices at Llanelli, Croydon, triggered threats of industrial action. Staff were told that a new computerised system would save £12 million a year and cut jobs from 2,500 to 1,200. Voluntary redundancies are being sought throughout the Home Office.

Trades unions said that they would take action unless Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, halts the plan for the largest ever cull of staff at the Home Office, involving 800 redundancies next year and the rest within two years. Any dispute could extend to frontline staff at airports, ferry ports and the Channel Tunnel. There is a 90-day deadline for consultation.

Donor scare

People suspected to have the human form of "mad cow" disease are being asked to dispose of their organ donor cards. The UK Transplant Support Services Authority said the risk of donors passing on CJD or the new variant linked with eating infected beef could not be ruled out.

Parliament plan

Plans for an environmentally friendly Scottish parliament building on an empty site at Leith waterfront have been unveiled. Forth Ports scheme for the site also includes a retail and leisure park and three terminals. Two other sites for the assembly in central Edinburgh are in contention.

Sailors jailed

Eight sailors from the destroyer HMS Southampton were jailed for subjecting two recruits to a degrading initiation ceremony. The eight mechanics had forced the two 20-year-olds to undergo a series of disgusting acts when they joined for their first sea posting.

Extradition delay

The extradition of Pearce McCauley, 32, wanted in Britain for conspiracy to murder and cause explosions, was deferred to allow the Irish courts to charge him with firearms offences. He is accused of the unlawful possession of firearms and was remanded in custody until November 11.

Lookalike home

A woman said to resemble Marilyn Monroe, who sparked a police hunt when she went missing from her home in Gosport, Hampshire, has returned to her family. JoAnne Watts, 35, a mother of two, said the pressures of business had driven her to spend three days in London.

Minister resigns as Irish peace talks open

By Martin Fletcher and Audrey Magee

THE first full-scale peace negotiations involving Unionists, nationalists, loyalists and republicans opened at Stormont yesterday, but the historic occasion was overshadowed by the resignation of Ray Burke, the Irish Foreign Minister, and diminished by the absence of the Ulster Unionist Party's leaders.

Mr Burke's departure, amid allegations of political corruption, caused more regret than alarm, though there were fears that the repercussions in Dublin could destabilise the Irish Government. David Andrews, Mr Burke's likely successor, is well-versed in the theology of the peace process and veteran civil servants are in any case the driving force in the Irish delegation.

The long-overdue departure of Tony Blair's "settlement train" was also marked by the delivery of a letter, bomb addressed to Jeffrey Donaldson, the Ulster Unionist MP for Lagan Valley. Army bomb disposal experts defused it.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said the launch of the substantive negotiations after 16 months of procedural wrangling was potentially "a defining moment for Northern Ireland".

Representatives of the eight participating parties spent the day delivering opening statements long on aspirations, short on substance and — for yesterday's purposes at least — moderate in tone. Even Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness, who on Sunday had talked of "smashing" the Union, chose to cloak his



Gail Naughton with tissue on which skin is grown. "We grow cells in same way as they grow naturally," she said

'There is no reason we can't make any part of the body'

Like a script from science fiction, scientists say they have the technology to repair a heart, writes Ian Murray

GAIL NAUGHTON is a hard-headed scientist with a dream that sounds like something from a script for *The Six Million Dollar Man*.

"There is no reason why we can't make any part of the human body to the highest standard, now we have discovered the technology," she said yesterday as she launched the first of what could be an entire range of body spares.

The technique involves growing new tissue by removing body cells and tricking them into believing they are back in the womb. Healthy living cells are taken for the process where possible, but for some organs at present they need to come from donors at a post mortem examination.

There has so far been little difficulty in replicating any organ apart from kidneys. "Hearts are simple muscle and there would be no problem in making a patch to fit, just like one for a tyre," Ms Naughton said.

The first product is a skin graft that can heal foot ulcers in diabetics, who until now have often had no alternative to amputation. The skin is grown from a master cell bank at Advanced Tissue Sciences, the company Ms

Anger at killer's move to Ulster

By Shirley English

A MURDERER who slashed the throat of a teenage football fan was at the centre of a political dispute last night over plans to transfer him from Scotland to the Maze prison, near Belfast, at the request of loyalists.

Papers are expected to be signed this week allowing Jason Campbell, 25, from Bridgeton, Glasgow, currently held at Shotts prison, Lanarkshire, to move to Northern Ireland.

It followed a decision by the Scottish Office to agree to the transfer which was originally approved by Mo Mowlam, Northern Ireland Secretary, as part of a deal with the Progressive Unionist Party before the start of peace talks.

A Scottish Office spokesman said: "Ministers are satisfied that the procedures are being followed correctly, and the transfer will take place."

The announcement provoked outrage from other political parties who earlier this week said transferring Campbell would give the murder a political dimension.

Campbell is currently serving a life sentence for the murder in October 1995 of 16-year-old Mark Scott, a Glasgow Celtic fan. The attack happened during a clash with supporters of Glasgow Rangers as Mark walked home with friends after a Celtic game.

Campbell, whose father and uncle are convicted UVF terrorists but whose family live in Glasgow, slashed the boy's throat because he was wearing a Celtic shirt and left him to die in the street.

Menzies Campbell, MP, Liberal Democrat spokesman on Scottish legal affairs last night said he had written to the chairman of the Scottish Select Committee in the House of Commons demanding a full investigation into the affair.

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Oxbridge danger

Continued from page 1

lor, denied that Oxford had the resources to preserve the college system on its own if public money were lost. "I do not believe that any rational Government would wish seriously to put at risk the intellectual achievements of the two ancient universities or to destroy their competitive position on the world scene," he said.

"But that is what is at risk — and the danger comes when those responsible for the decisions are not fully aware of the risks and their implications."

Dr North pointed out that Oxford's course costs are lower than Harvard's in the United States but that it has just a quarter of the resources and has to compete with the leading American universities for top academics and research students.

He credits the college system with Oxford's low drop-out rate and high academic achievements. "I believe that a powerful case can be made to justify the continued payment of college fees at a significant level," he said.

In his vice-chancellor's address last week, Professor Alec Broers of Cambridge fired the first salvo in what could

Doctors set out charges option

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

DOCTORS today tell the Government how to raise up to £10 billion a year for the National Health Service by charging patients, but give warning that the move would prove counterproductive.

The NHS budget for next year is £46.2 billion, but the British Medical Association says that the service needs £5 billion more in the next four years to meet overheads and to modernise itself. Charging is one way to raise the money, the BMA suggests, but that would be unfair and damaging to health, it says. Only if taxes are increased to fund the service will it continue to provide good-quality health care for all, the BMA says.

The paper says that "hotel charges" of £80 a night for hospital beds would raise £2.5 billion; £10 for a consultation with a general practitioner would bring in £3.3 billion; increasing prescription charges to £10 for all would generate £4 billion; and £10 charges for day home visits by GPs would bring in a further

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Hollywood

Nanny 'killed' baby she saw as little brat

FROM PETER BEAL IN BOSTON

A BRITISH teenager murdered a baby in a fit of rage while unhappy with her life as a nanny, a jury was told yesterday. Louise Woodward, 19, went to work in America during a year's break before university, but was said to have felt that she was underpaid and regarded the two children in her care as "fussy, cranky, crying little brats".



Susan and Gary Woodward, the nanny's parents

Miss Woodward, from Elton, near Chester, had been warned about staying out too late and failing to get up in the mornings, just five days before nine-month-old Matthew Eappen died of head injuries.

The prosecution said that she shook him and slammed him in a "frustrated, unhappy and resentful rage" when he kept crying. His doctor's parents were both out at work. The teenager, who has spent eight months behind bars awaiting trial, denies a charge of first-degree murder, which carries a sentence of life imprisonment without parole. Her father, Gary, sat behind her in the public gallery of the court at Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the opening of the trial, which is expected to take three weeks. Defence lawyers said they

would be calling some of the world's leading medical experts to show that the baby's death had been caused by a skull injury which had gone unnoticed for several days. They said that Miss Woodward was not unhappy with her job, had cared for the children, and volunteered to help at a nursery on her Sundays off.

Opening the prosecution, Gerry Leone, the deputy first assistant district attorney, said: "This case is about Matthew Eappen being violently slammed against a hard object and severely shaken, causing massive injuries. This violent shaking and this severe slamming being done by the defendant Louise Woodward in a frustrated, unhappy, resentful rage based on her attitude to her job and a crying Matthew Eappen. The best evidence to what happened to Matthew Eappen's bruised, broken and battered body." Matthew's mother, Deborah, left him at home with Miss Woodward on the morning of February 4. "It was the last time Deborah Eappen would see her little boy normal, healthy and well again. Later that day, after an emergency call, he was taken to hospital suffering from a 2½ inch skull fracture, a massively swollen brain and retinal haemorrhaging behind the eyes."

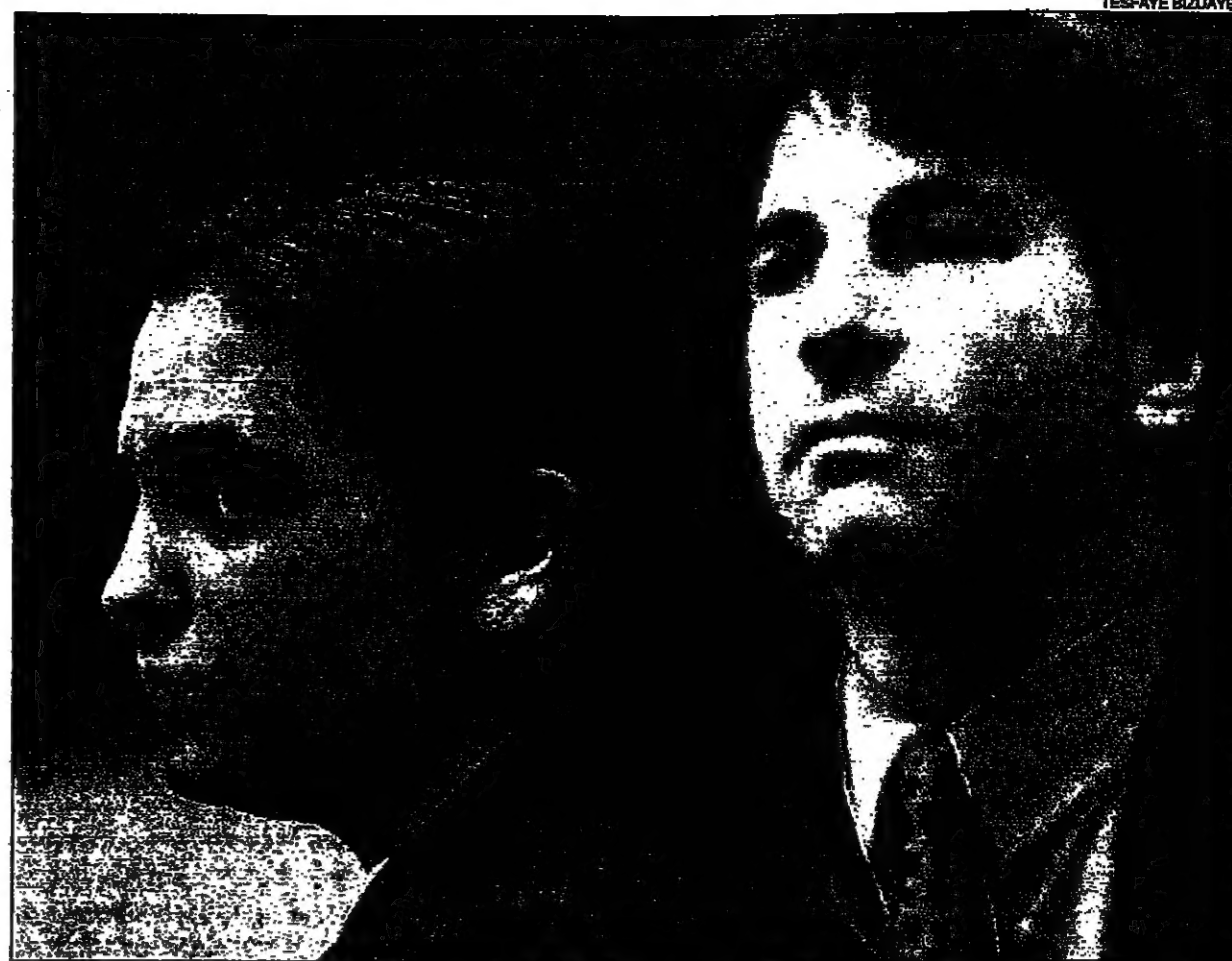
Mr Leone said that as doctors fought to save the child's life, Miss Woodward was telling police that she had been unhappy and frustrated with him crying all day. She said she had been "a little rough" with him, had tossed him on the bed and dropped him in the bathroom, possibly hitting his head where the bath met the wall tiles. The nanny later shook him to revive him because he seemed unresponsive to her. But Mr Leone said: "These injuries were not caused by her being a little rough, tossing him on the bed or dropping him on the floor. They were not caused by a gentle revival shaking. These injuries were caused by a violent slam against a hard object, causing the skull fracture which eventually killed him five days later."

Five days earlier, the nanny had received an ultimatum from the baby's parents over staying out late at night and her inability to get up to look after Matthew and his two-year-old brother Brendan. Mr Leone alleged that Miss Woodward, who had started to lead a busy social life with friends in Boston, resented the fact that she was paid the same as au pairs who looked after one child, and was heard saying to a friend in a theatre queue that she thought the two children were "fussy, cranky, crying little brats". But Andrew Good, defending, said

biomechanics and forensic pathology. You will hear from people with enormous knowledge and experience who will tell you that this child unfortunately suffered an injury earlier that caused this fracture. "You will hear it might well have been an accident done with far less force and it caused a leak in a blood vessel into his skull." He said there was evidence of an earlier wrist fracture which had gone unnoticed by both the baby's parents. He said that there were notes made by Mrs Eappen that the baby had not been "healthy and fine" in the days leading up to his death. Miss Woodward had told the mother that the day before, the baby had been crying, lethargic, hard to arouse and lost his appetite. On the day he was taken to hospital, she had had to wake him up, he would not take his breakfast and then had an unusually long nap. His condition deteriorated

rapidly and Miss Woodward had realised "something was terribly wrong". He said: "She paged the father unsuccessfully three times and then paged his mum successfully and called 911 [the US emergency number]. She was trying to help this child." The baby had entered the emergency room with not a mark on his body. "There was no swelling, bruising, abrasions and no lumps, nothing. There were no external signs of trauma at all." A tape recording of the emergency call was played to the court. Miss Woodward was heard telling the operator: "Help, he's not focusing. Help, he's not focusing. Help, what can I do?"

Eric Braceland, a police officer who called at the house, said that Miss Woodward had told him: "He just wouldn't stop crying; he just wouldn't stop." The case continues.



Louise Woodward in court with a member of her defence team. She has spent eight months awaiting trial

Help, he's not focusing. He is making gurgling noises. Help, what can I do?

Hollywood fights for Princess tapes

BY DANIEL MCGRODY

A HOLLYWOOD producer announced yesterday that he has the rights to taped interviews by Diana, Princess of Wales, to make a film about her marriage break-up. Earl Spencer was said last night to be "appalled" at the reported deal over transcripts of tapes that the Princess gave secretly to Andrew Morton for his book, *Diana: Her True Story*. The Princess's brother was said to be particularly upset that an actress would be allowed to use her words. It is understood that he will instruct lawyers to examine if he can stop the film from using transcripts of the tapes made when the Princess collaborated over the original book in 1991.

But last night its publisher, Michael O'Mara, denied that the rights had been secured by the Hollywood producer, Martin Poll. Mr Poll's company made the 1993 four-hour television mini-series based on the original version of the book. The publisher called the deal "very misleading". A spokeswoman for Mr O'Mara said that the deal was not new. It was the one which allowed Mr Poll to make the 1993 series. "So far as we are concerned, he is not allowed to use the material in the foreword of the new book based on the transcripts of Diana's tape recordings," she said. The publisher says the existing deal means the film company could not use quotations from the Princess that are included in the 18,000 words taken

from her taped interviews which appear in the revised edition, *Diana: Her True Story - In Her Own Words*. Mr Poll denied his film was "cashing in" on the Princess's memory. A spokesman said: "It has become obvious that other films will be made about the Princess. Martin Poll felt he would be able to make a film which reflects her own views and her own perceptions." He said the initial announcement had been based on a misunderstanding and was not intended to imply that a new deal had been signed relating to the latest book. The 1992 agreement did allow the company to use the final chapters of the new book, updating the Princess's story to her death, though it gave no rights to use any of the tapes or

transcripts, he said. A German film producer, Christian Seidel, is involved in the deal. The two producers said that they intend to "use a cast of distinguished British actors for the new film and will conduct a search throughout the United Kingdom for the actress to play Diana". Mr Morton is believed to be negotiating for other television and film deals. His revised biography has entered the top 50 bestsellers list at number 38 after returns from only two days of sales. The book joins six others - two by Morton - on the Princess's life in Whitaker BookTrack's top 50 selling books for the week ending October 4. His original edition has moved up two places from number 4 to number 2.

Murder case nurses face new demand

BY DANIEL MCGRODY

THE brother of Yvonne Gilford, the murdered Australian nurse, is demanding that the British nurses accused of killing her in Saudi Arabia drop plans to sue his lawyers for \$200 million (£125 million) for "mental cruelty". Frank Gilford says that otherwise he will not agree to waive his demand for the death penalty. The ultimatum comes days before a court is to decide the fate of Deborah Parry, on a charge of murder. Lucille McLaughlin, 31, has been

convicted as an accessory and sentenced to eight years in jail and 500 lashes. The nurses issued writs from their prison cell in July suing Mr Gilford's American lawyers for "their ill-motivated and evil scheme to make our ordeal worse than it would otherwise have been". Salah al-Hejailan, the Saudi lawyer leading the defence case, has said that he believes Mr Gilford is risking \$12 million blood money to protect his lawyers. "The Saudi courts will take a dim view of his behaviour."



Beer: denies charge of assault at Heathrow

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Business, page 27

Princess's attack on computers is backed by Gates

By John O'Leary, Education Editor

THE Princess Royal found an unlikely ally yesterday when she warned schools against allowing computers to dominate education. Bill Gates, billionaire head of the world's largest computer software company, agreed.

The Princess told heads of independent schools that children needed to learn social skills just as much as computer skills.

Mr Gates, the founder and chief executive of Microsoft, had earlier endorsed Tony Blair's plans to link Britain's 32,000 schools to the Internet by 2002. However, he added: "Nobody is suggesting that technology is a substitute for the teacher."

Speaking at St John's College, Cambridge, he said he agreed with the Princess. "Technology is just a tool and this will be a tool in the hands of teachers. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is most important."

The Princess, speaking at the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference in Brighton, said the rise of information technology presented a new challenge to the teaching profession. Children needed more help than many recognised to turn on-screen information into knowledge. "Information isn't every-

thing. It is the use of that information that becomes knowledge. Just having access to information isn't the same thing. That is a real challenge to those who educate."

She said children also needed to be taught social skills. "If there are youngsters who are very competent with computers, they can learn everything that they need to know from these machines. But how do they learn to interact with other people?"

After his meeting with Mr Blair, Mr Gates said that he was "delighted" to have Microsoft involved in helping to shape some of the fundamental strategic thinking behind making technology an integral part of every aspect of British life. He said he fully endorsed the plan "to improve the learning experience for all British students."

Mr Gates did not offer any financial backing for the project. However, Mr Blair said that his support would give a tremendous boost to the scheme, which will provide £100 million of public money.

Speaking after a "fascinating" meeting, the Prime Minister said: "Getting the support and expertise of Bill Gates in this enterprise provides a real boost to our drive to make sure British children get the very best in their

schools." Mr Blair later travelled to Holland Park comprehensive school in West London to launch the scheme. The school was carefully chosen by Downing Street because it provides a powerful illustration of the importance of the initiative. The school's 150 computers, which have to be shared by nearly 1,500 pupils, are old and will soon be obsolete.

The government scheme will provide new equipment linked to a massive website, known as the National Grid for Learning, which will provide a network of material to help students studying information technology. It will also help with numeracy and literacy. National Lottery money will be spent on training 500,000 teachers in information technology.

Leading article, page 19



Happy to be here: Jonida Gjodete, left, and Paulina Wojtowska at Pembroke College, Oxford, yesterday

Students who lost hope start at Oxford

By David Charter, Education Correspondent

TWO students too poor to study at Oxford took up places yesterday after their academic careers were saved by an appeal in *The Times*. Up to £15,000 a year has been guaranteed by individual donors and trusts for Paulina Wojtowska, from Poland, and Jonida Gjodete, Oxford's only Albanian undergraduate.

The 18-year-olds expected to have to share accommodation but were delighted to find that they have their own rooms in Pembroke College. Miss Wojtowska, who gained five A-grade A levels on a scholarship at Milfield, travelled from her home near the Polish border with Russia by bus. "It is just fantastic to be here," she said. "I could not believe it was happening until the last minute."

Miss Gjodete, from Vlora, who gained an international Baccalaureate at a college in Norway on a scholarship, said that she had given up hope of a place at Oxford.

Cambridge gets windows of opportunity

By Philip Delves Broughton

NEW money met ancient academia yesterday when Bill Gates, the world's richest man, went to Cambridge. The admiration was mutual.

For Gates, the founder and chief executive of Microsoft, everything was "amazing". The brains at Cambridge were amazing. The university was amazing. The opportunities were amazing.

That Tony Blair, whom he had met in the morning, knew that the Internet was amazing. Professor Stephen Hawking, whose friendship with Gates's chief technology officer, Nathan Myrland, helped to inspire the donation to Cambridge, was "an amazing great guy".

For Cambridge, Gates — or at least his generosity — was amazing too. This year, he has given \$20 million (£12.5 million) of his own charity's money to the university and has pledged a £15 billion investment in a Microsoft computer research centre at the university. For a man

who wakes up each morning \$20 million richer than when he went to bed, the money is loose change. For Cambridge, however, this is big news.

The title of the computer age landed by helicopter in a field near St John's College. Bill — everyone calls him Bill — wore a leaf-green suit and a red tie covered in what looked like grey slugs. His trademark lick of greasy hair over his brow had been trimmed into a designer ragged fringe.

He was introduced and thanked by the university Vice-Chancellor, Alice Broers, an engineer by training. Professor Broers was working at IBM in the late seventies when the company bought an operating system for their PCs from a floppy-haired kid called Gates who had dropped out of Harvard after a year.

For his lecture to computer students, Gates changed into a blue sweatshirt with Cambridge written across it in white letters. Gone was the corporate swell and in his came the computer nerd.

He launched into the world of high computer science, well beyond those who find Windows a struggle. At the end of his talk, Gates was presented with a glass brick inscribed with the first computer program, called "a bootstrap loader". It was presented by David Wheeler, the Cambridge professor who wrote it in the late 1940s.

The program was short and simple. "Just the kind of program I like," said Gates, who, for all his billions, looks like an excited student just awarded a prize.



Gates: given the first computer program

Rival firms seek slice of market

By Nick Nuttall, Technology Correspondent

A BATTLE for control of the educational computing market looks likely after Bill Gates's meeting with the Prime Minister yesterday at which he backed the Government's plans to link all schools to the Internet.

Despite the popularity in homes and businesses of Windows, the operating system which Mr Gates's company Microsoft makes, machines such as the British-made Acorn microcomputer that operate on different systems still hold sway in British schools. The Government's plan to upgrade school computers and link them to the Internet should give Mr Gates's an opening to get more personal computers into schools that use the Microsoft system. Microsoft is co-operating

with BT, who want to cable the schools, and Research Machines, a British-based PC-maker. Mr Gates's company will also have the chance to sell their Internet Explorer software, which searches the Internet for information.

Computer firms are also keen to back the Government's £100 million scheme because they believe it will lead to a big growth in the market for PCs and software in homes and businesses as well as schools.

Not everyone is happy. Charles Crook, an expert in computers and education at Loughborough University, said that Mr Gates and his company would probably make plenty of money from the Government's plan, but that children were unlikely to become better educated.

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IF THIS WAS USED NUCLEAR FUEL, WE COULD MAKE IT BURN

Mellor claims a goal for fans going to Italy

By RICHARD DUCE

DAVID MELLOR, embracing his new role as champion of the "decent" football fan, won assurances from Italy yesterday that policing of the England's World Cup qualifying match in Rome will not be oppressive.

Mr Mellor, head of the Government's football task force, had 45 minutes of talks with Paolo Galli, the Italian Ambassador, to express his concern that thousands of ordinary England fans will not be treated like hooligans. The meeting came less than 24 hours after British police said up to 700 known trouble-makers were heading for Rome without tickets for Saturday's match.

Mr Mellor said afterwards that helpful assurances had been given about how the Italians will cope with an influx of 10,000 England supporters: "The chief of police in

Sport... 45

Rome has assured the Ambassador that the civil rights of visiting supporters will be respected, and oppressive policing will not be a feature.

Mr Mellor's delegation included representatives of football supporters' groups. He said: "We've made the point that we have no sympathy with hooligans causing trouble, and they should be dealt with as the law permits. We are here to argue in favour of decent people, who have been vetted by the Football Association, or are going out on executive packages."

His main concern has centred on plans for fans to be searched up to three times before entering the Olympic Stadium in Rome, and having items such as coins and cigarette lighters confiscated in case they could be used as missiles. The Ambassador had assured him that "nothing will be done to the English fans that will not also be done to Italian fans. There will be consistency of treatment between the two nationalities."

Newspaper pays Freud damages

THE artist Lucian Freud and his daughter, Rose Boyl, yesterday received "substantial" libel damages from *The Daily Telegraph* for alleging that she was the mother of five children by him.

The "distressing" article by Daniel Farnon appeared in the arts and books section last year under the heading "Charming Prince of Darkness", their solicitor Peter Carter-Ruck told the High Court. "It included the statement that Lucian Freud publicly acknowledges five children by Rose Boyl."

Mr Farnon, the Editor, Charles Moore, and the publisher "now readily acknowledge Rose Boyl is Lucian Freud's daughter and has no children by her father". They deeply regretted "this grave and distressing error" and withdrew "unreservedly any suggestion of impropriety between Lucian Freud and his daughter".

The Daily Telegraph agreed to pay undisclosed damages and legal costs.

Muted cheers greet Prince's restoration

Neighbours worry about commotion as plans to revive former royal residence are revealed, writes Joanna Bale



Prince Edward: plans for renovation



Duke of Connaught: home built for him

IT is one thing to have a prince for a neighbour, but quite another to put up with the media circus that comes with him. So it was entirely understandable that the citizens of Bagshot were yesterday giving only two cheers for Prince Edward's plan to move in next door, with or without his girlfriend, Sophie Rhys-Jones. Belinda Harvey, who runs the pet shop in the Surrey commuter town, said: "I suppose his presence will add to the prestige of the area, but it could also annoy some people because of all the media attention that he will attract, especially with all this speculation that he is about to announce his engagement."

The Prince intends to restore the Grade II listed former royal residence, Bagshot Park, as his new home, but as plans were made available at council offices for public view there were concerns that he might not get planning permission for the changes he wants to make.

Scott Seaton, landlord of the King's Arms pub, predicted that the Prince could face opposition from residents to his scheme, which includes demolishing one of the wings of the 120-year-old house. He said: "People here are really petty and they like to complain about everything. I tried to change the pub sign and there were lots of objections to it."

Vera Daglish, 77, whose great-grandfather worked on the royal estate, was one of those concerned about preserving the house. She said: "He's welcome to move in but he shouldn't be allowed to mess around with it."

Mary Bennett, assistant curator at Surrey Heath Museum in Camberley, hastily arranged an exhibition of historical photographs of Bagshot Park, which is also intended to be the base for the Prince's film production company, Ardent. She said: "There is already lots of media interest and we have been inundated with calls, but I think most people will be pleased that the Prince will be using it as a home, which is what it was originally built for."

The house was built by Queen Victoria in 1875 for her third son, Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught prior to his marriage to Princess Louise-Margaret, Prince Edward,

also a third son, has stressed that his plans are not connected with any development in his relationship with Miss Rhys-Jones, his girlfriend of four years.

The main house and stables were occupied under a lease from the Crown by the Royal Army Chaplains' Department since the war, but it is now unoccupied. If planning permission is granted, the Prince will take a 50-year lease on the property from the Crown Estate.

The cost of the year-long refurbishment, which includes adding en-suite bathrooms, but nothing as extravagant as a swimming pool, will not be from the public purse. The Prince, who

lives at a Buckingham Palace apartment where Miss Rhys-Jones is a frequent overnight visitor, said he was attracted to the property because of its convenient location just outside the M25, within easy reach of Windsor and London. It was also "incredibly private", set in 50 acres adjoining Crown Estate farmland and forest.

He has commissioned the architect Stephen Batchelor of the London practice Bowyer Langlands Batchelor to carry out the work, which will also include accommodation for three staff. Once described as a "textbook example of a Victorian country house", the brick and stone mock Tudor building was criticised as "scarily ugly" and "like a Bournemouth hotel" by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner in his 1962 book *The Buildings of England*. It was considered as a possible home for the Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, after her marriage in 1947.

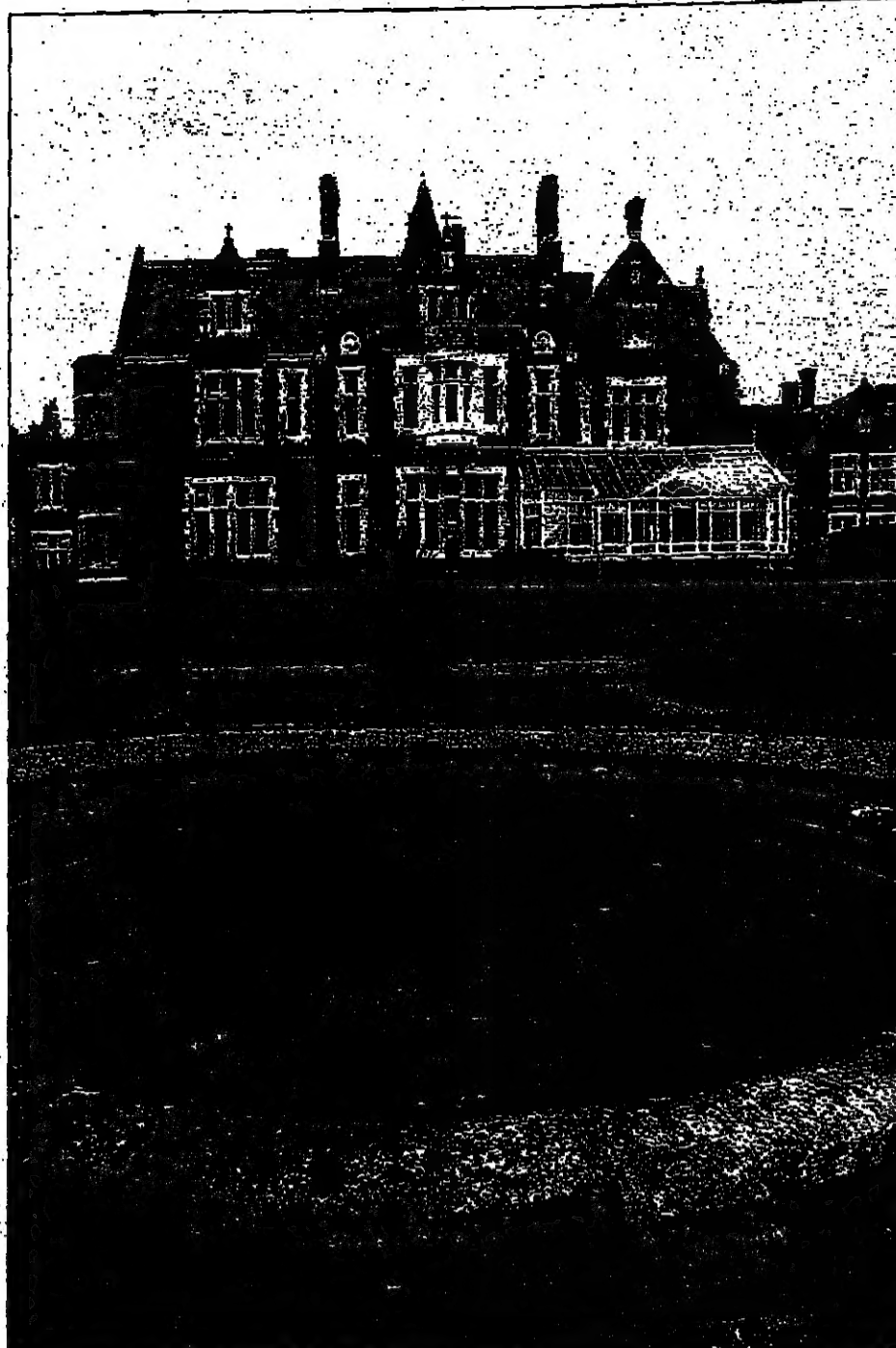
One of the rooms which will be preserved is the Indian Room, with its walls covered by carvings, and originally embellished with gems, which was a wedding gift to the Duke of Connaught from the princes of India.

John Sylvester, director of planning at Surrey Heath council, said: "We do not anticipate any major objections to the plans, despite its listed status, because the Prince has already had favourable reaction from English Heritage and the Victorian Society. However we don't know until we consult residents and other groups what the reaction will be."

Alastair Brissenden, manager of The Cricketers pub next to the house's main entrance, will be one of those consulted. He said: "I can't imagine him and Sophie popping in for drinks and a chat every Sunday, but I won't be making any objections to their plans."

Built of red Victorian brick, Bagshot Park is a mile less distinguished than some other private royal residences (Alan Hamilton writes). Both the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal enjoy understated 18th century architectural style in their Gloucestershire homes.

Highgrove, near Tetbury, was built in 1796 in a plain but



Bagshot Park: described as "textbook country house" and "scarily ugly"

pleasing style: the house has four reception rooms, nine main bedrooms, a nursery wing and staff quarters. Along with its gardens designed by the Prince, Highgrove is surrounded by its 900-acre home farm, run by the Prince on strict organic principles.

The Princess Royal was given Gatcombe Park by the Queen, who bought it in 1976, soon after her daughter's marriage to Captain Mark Phillips. Built in mellow Bath stone in the 1770s, Gatcombe has four reception rooms, five main and four secondary bedrooms, a library, billiard room, conservatory and staff wing. The Gatcombe estate extends to 730 acres, including woodland and a trout lake.

Whatever Prince Edward plans for Bagshot Park, it is unlikely he could stir up anything like the architectural bile aimed at Sunninghill Park, built in 1990 near Ascot for the Duke and Duchess of York at a cost of £35 million. It has 50 rooms including 12 bedrooms, a cinema, swimming pool and a lavatory seat which plays *The Star-Spangled Banner* when sat upon.



Indian Room: richly carved panels a gift of empire

Porter 'ignored' warnings on homes sell-off

By STEPHEN FARRELL

DAME Shirley Porter ignored the reservations of senior Westminster City Council officials and councillors over the sale of council homes in key marginal wards to potential Tory voters, a court was told yesterday.

In a series of clashes during cross-examination of her High Court challenge to a £31 million surcharge imposed by the district auditor John Magill, Dame Shirley, 66, was questioned about warnings by one senior official that her aim of selling off 500 homes a year was "on the edge of perversity".

Alun Jones, QC, for the district auditor, told her: "Your approach as leader of the council, I suggest, was that your first, foremost and primary consideration was not to fulfil your duty to the people living in Westminster but to make sure you got re-elected in 1990."

He pointed to a report in June 1987 in which Graham England, Westminster's former housing director, questioned the council's proposals to sell off 500 council homes a year across the city. Up to 250 of these were to be in eight marginal wards where, the ruling Conservative group wanted to attract pro-Tory voters.

Mr Jones said: "Did Mr England tell you that he thought 500 was on the edge of perversity? He could not justify more than 172."

Dame Shirley said she did not recall the choice of words. Although others had made representations she did not recall them being as forceful as he claimed. She said the council always took independent legal advice before enacting policies.

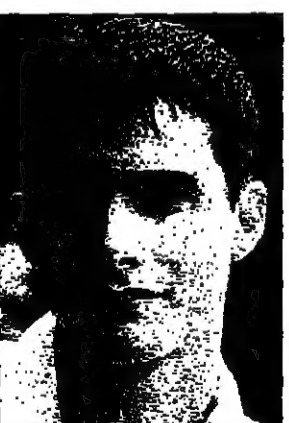
"Never at any time did I do anything or take any actions that were not on behalf of the citizens of Westminster and I am not aware that I did anything improper at any time," she said.

She also denied claims that she had "bullied" council officers saying she listened to everything they said. "I did not know where the evidence was for that. I think I asked them to work hard," she said.

Dame Shirley and four former Westminster officers and councillors are appealing against the surcharge. They claim the district auditor acted unlawfully and unfairly by accusing them of "wilful misconduct" and "disgraceful and improper gerrymandering" between 1987 and 1989. The hearing is expected to last five weeks.

Ministers to allow free vote on gay age of consent

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT



Morris said ruling gives young gays hope

MPs are to have a free vote on whether to lower the age of consent for homosexuals to 16 after the European Commission of Human Rights ruled yesterday that the law should be changed.

The Government said it would drop its opposition to legal challenges brought by two young gay men and instead refer the issue of the homosexual age of consent to Parliament at the earliest opportunity.

The deal was announced after the European Commission of Human Rights yesterday upheld the men's claim that the present age of consent of 18 contravenes the European Convention on Human Rights. It is

three years since MPs were last asked for their views during changes to the Tory Government's Criminal Justice and Public Order Act. Then, the Commons voted to lower the age from 21 to 18, but not to equalise it with the heterosexual age of consent.

Labour's majority now makes a vote for equality likely, with legislation by the end of the next parliamentary session at the latest.

The two London men who each took cases to Europe, Euan Sutherland, 20, of Dulwich, and Chris Morris, 18, of Ealing, claimed the unequal age of consent violated their rights under Article 8 of the European Convention, on the right to privacy, and Article 14, which protects against discrimination.

Mr Sutherland said: "The law

should treat everyone equally and it angers me that young gay men can still be treated as criminals."

"I am delighted that the Government has decided not to contest the case and that we will have another opportunity of persuading MPs to vote for equality."

Mr Sutherland, who was 17 when he began his legal action, told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "Enough damage was being done to people up and down the country."

"You didn't have to be prosecuted, the mere threat, the mere thought of ending up in prison because of a sexual relationship is quite damaging to young people," he said. "By reducing the age of consent to 16, we are encouraging people to make informed decisions. We are not

asking them to have sex. We are not encouraging them to have sex."

Mr Morris said the decision would help young gays to "express themselves better. It's very hard to come out especially if you're saying not only am I a gay but also a criminal."

The commission heard Mr Sutherland's case in Strasbourg in May last year. Mr Morris's case has not been heard. It said yesterday that the law was discriminatory and that "no objective and reasonable justification exists for the maintenance of a higher minimum age of consent to male homosexual than to heterosexual acts".

Angela Mason, director of the gay rights group Stonewall, which backed the men, said: "A free vote in Parliament will be an opportunity to

break with the centuries of discrimination and bigotry and begin the process of accepting gay men and lesbians as equal citizens in society."

However, not all Labour MPs will vote for a change. Donald Anderson, who voted against reducing the age to 16 in 1994, said he would do so again.

The real issue was the protection of young people, he said. "I believe that to go lower than that [18] you make many vulnerable young people, who can be manipulated, move into a lifestyle which is not their own."

"Many young men go through a homosexual phase, they flirt with homosexuality within that sort of age group, and may be manipulated into a homosexual community, into a community which is not their own."

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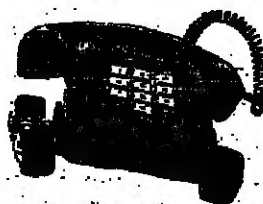
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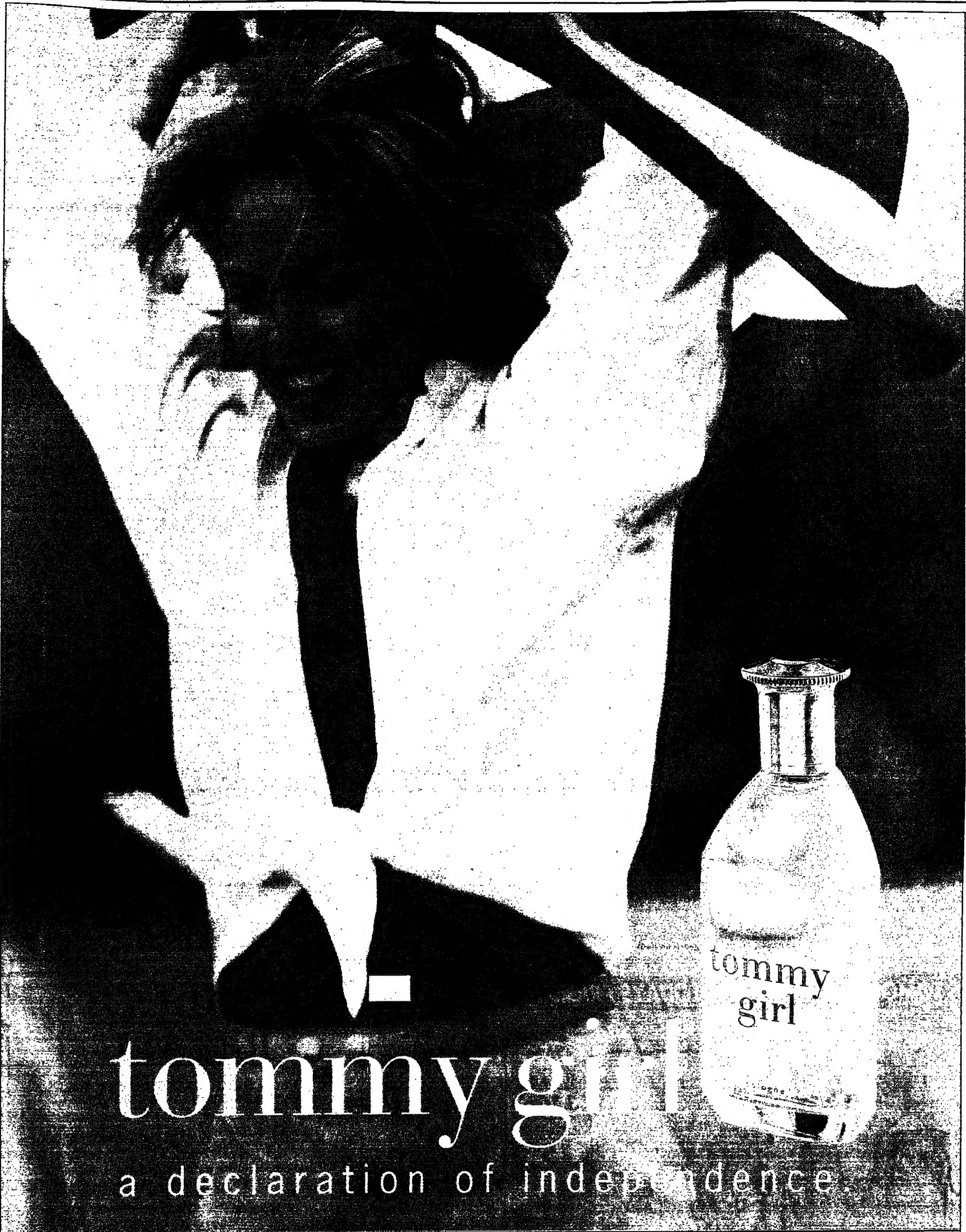
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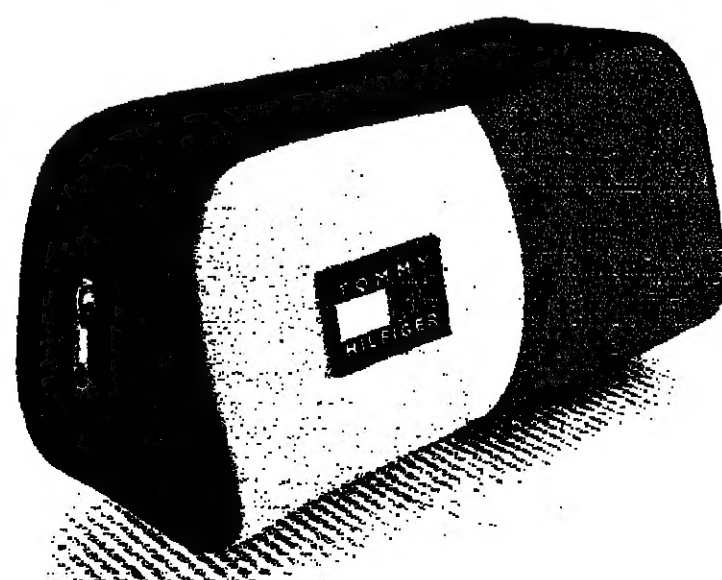
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'I want this party to be the greatest'

Unite behind my reforms, Hague urges

THE SPEECH

By Polly Newton
POLITICAL REPORTER

WILLIAM HAGUE called on his party yesterday to unite and fight, warning the Tories that they had "a mountain to climb" before they could regain power.

He pledged to use the endorsement given to him by Conservative Party members to press ahead with fundamental reform. "I have no illusion about the mammoth task ahead of us. But I pledge with every breath in my body to do everything in my power to rebuild this party," he said.

He promised to involve rank and file Tories more than ever in shaping policy. But he said that, although they should not be afraid of debate, they must unite around the policies that were agreed.

"When I say we are going to double our party's membership, transform our organisation and take the time and trouble to listen to millions of people, I mean it. And I mean

true strength of a party is judged by whether it can develop the ideas and bring on the talent to meet the challenges that this country will face in the future."

He and party members knew why the Conservatives had lost the election. "People thought we had lost touch with those we always claimed to represent. Our parliamentary party came to be seen as divided, arrogant, selfish and conceited. Our party as a whole was regarded as out of touch and irrelevant." Now it had to show the British people that it had learnt its lesson and would change.

Mr Hague said that the Tories should never forget that John Major and Margaret Thatcher had transformed Britain's economy from "a basket case" into one of the healthiest in the world. "We slashed taxes, we freed huge industries from the dead hand of state control, we handed power to consumers, families, parents and individuals."

The party should not be afraid of the future. "It now falls to all of us to make the changes to push forward the new ideas." He wanted the support of more young voters, more black and Asian people in the party and more women Tory MPs. "I want nothing less than to turn this party into the greatest volunteer party in the western world."

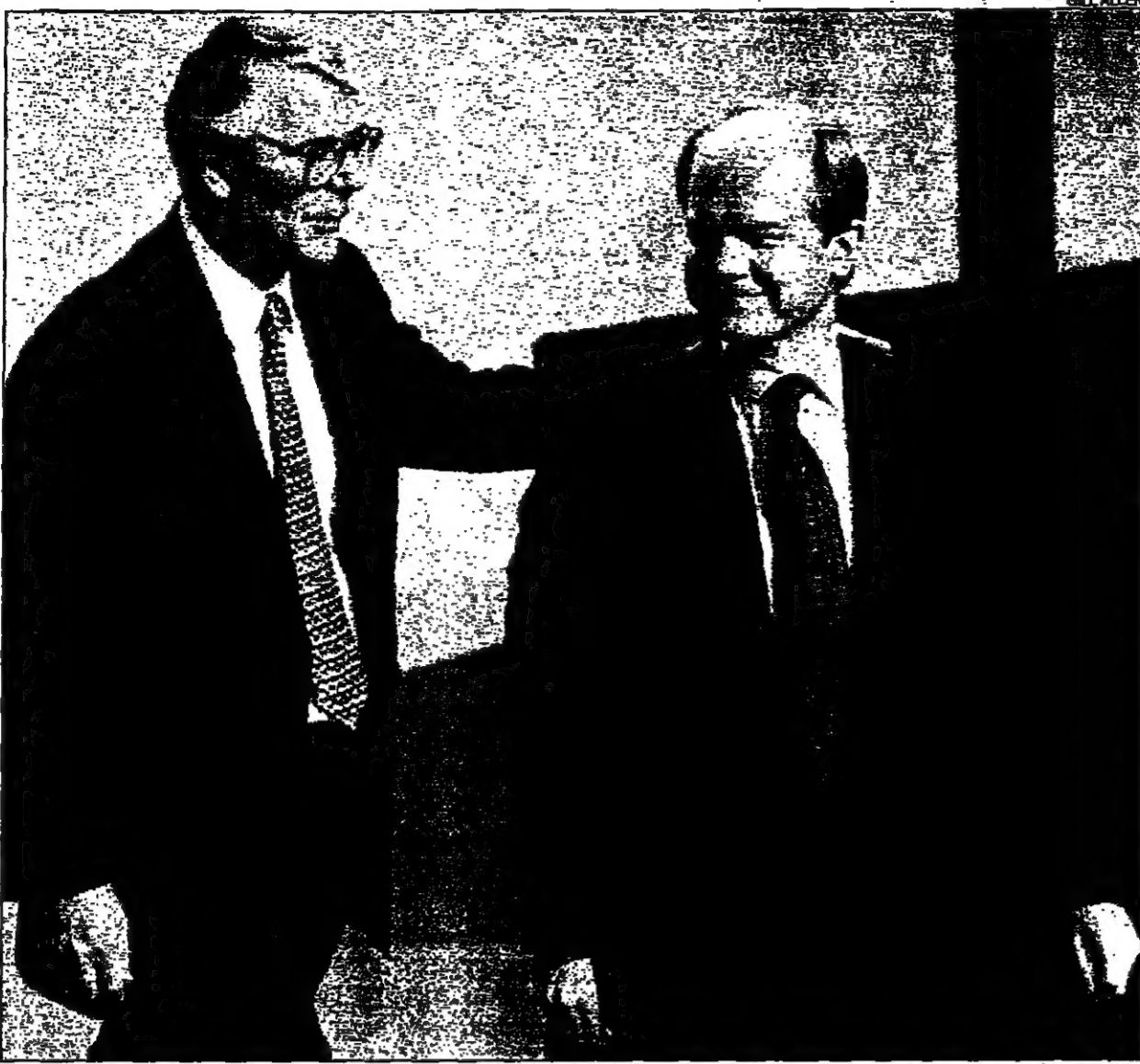
The Tories would be a constructive Opposition, supporting the Government when it deserved praise but speaking out when it was wrong. In contrast, the Liberal Democrats had sold out. "Just look at Paddy Ashdown - bright eyes, quivering nose, panting heavily, begging, whimpering ecstatically for the next scrap chucked down from Labour's Cabinet table."

"Remember how Harold Wilson had his famous labradors? Now, for the second time in my lifetime, we have a Labour Prime Minister with a faithful pet called Paddy."

Earlier, Lord Parkinson, the party chairman, said the ballot on reforms had revealed a Tory membership of almost 400,000, more than the leadership had expected.

He praised Mr Hague as a man of substance and principle. But he was a modern man, rejecting stuffiness and complacency.

Simon Jenkins, page 18
Leading article and Letters, page 19



John Major demonstrating support yesterday for William Hague "an able man of talent and integrity"

Major pledges loyalty and condemns public brawling

JOHN MAJOR called on the Conservative Party yesterday to rediscover the art of working together as he pinpointed the unruly behaviour of Tory MPs as a key factor in the scale of the election defeat.

The former Prime Minister was given an affectionate reception by activists who appeared determined to show that they did not hold him responsible for the calamity of May 1.

He brought off the near-impossible - standing ovations before and after a speech in which he delivered scathingly veiled criticism of Baroness Thatcher, the heroine of every Tory conference.

Mr Major, whose frustration at what he regards as the lack of support he received from Lady Thatcher and her acolytes has been known for years, promised that he would give William Hague the unqualified support in public and in private that he had a right to expect from his predecessor.

Gaspes intermingled with cheers as he continued: "If I should disagree with William, I'll do it in private, not on College Green [the area outside the Commons used by camera crews for political interviews], not on the media, not in anonymous briefings to the press that breed suspicion and distrust."

Rank and file affection for the former Prime Minister is plain to see, reports Philip Webster

Mr Major was cheered throughout by activists who saw him as a man getting off his chest in an address to a party audience the anger at the way his parliamentary colleagues had behaved. He told the activists that the election defeat was not their defeat. But when he added "perhaps it was mine", there were loud shouts of "No".

There were cheers of agreement when he suggested that the cause might have been that "divided views - expressed without restraint - in the parliamentary party made our positions impossible".

In a reference to the way that sleaze allegations, particularly the Neil Hamilton affair, dogged his Government to the end, Mr Major said that he was backing Mr Hague's reforms because "never again must we be constitutionally powerless to deal with people whose

behaviour is damaging to the party as a whole".

Before the election, Mr Major and the Tory hierarchy had wanted Mr Hamilton to step aside, but they had no power to force him.

Mr Major said of the lost election: "Rather than brood over it, we must accept our defeat as gracefully as we can. We shouldn't waste our time in pointless recrimination." Things could not be left as they were.

"It's a simple choice: reform the party, back William Hague, rediscover the art of working together, fight every seat, for every vote - or fight one another and lose elections."

He declared: "I know my choice. I'm backing William. I'm backing him because he's an able man of talent and integrity with a tough job ahead. It will be difficult being the leader of a newly defeated party."

"For a while, people won't wish to listen to what we have to say. But that will pass. The tide will turn - and, as the local election results are already suggesting, perhaps more speedily than anyone imagines."

With that Mr Major was away, leaving swiftly with his wife, Norma, for a lecture tour in America.

The long route to reversing Tory fortunes

By James Landale
POLITICAL REPORTER

A NEW "ethics and integrity" committee will police the standards of Conservative MPs as part of plans to combat sleaze.

A 39-page "green paper" of reforms for the party published yesterday also proposes that the Tory leadership should have the power to suspend or expel any party member whose behaviour "lacks integrity and which is likely to bring the party as a whole into disrepute".

The new committee would include the chairman of the backbench 1922 Committee and a senior representative of the voluntary wing and would meet twice a year and judge cases. Individuals under investigation will have the right to appear before it.

A governing "board", set up to run the new party, will have the final decision on what disciplinary powers are used.

Any party member or official who refuses to accept the decision of the committee could be suspended, as could an entire constituency executive which refused, for example, to acknowledge that their MP had been found guilty of misconduct.

The anti-sleaze moves are just one of a wide range of reforms which will be debated over the winter and agreed at a special conference in the spring. The document says the decline in organisation and membership is structural, not just cyclical, and there is no evidence of a revival of membership and activism.

The party has half the number of councillors it had in the 1980s and membership has declined from an estimated one million members in 1979 to just "a few hundred thousand". Last year the constituencies provided just four per cent of the national party income and the number of professional agents has fallen from more than 500 in the 1950s to 148.

Key proposals include: Structure: A single "streamlined" party unifying the three existing and separate wings - MPs, Central Office and voluntary party. An all-powerful board would have 12 to 14 members including six elected from the voluntary party. Underneath the board, would come a "national convention", made up of local party and area chairmen.

Leadership: Although the case for membership involve-

ment is "overwhelming", MPs would still have the right to initiate a contest and put forward candidates. Members would take part via an electoral college but the document does not say at what stage. The college will have a "significant" percentage of the ballot but the amount is not given.

Constitution: A new constitution will be drawn up. A constitutional college will be set up to adapt the document where necessary.

Membership: A national membership list will be kept, regularly up-dated, on a computer at Central Office. Subscription rates will be standardised, with a "gold card" giving greater rights to merchandise and party documents. Members might also be given the right to elect local party chairmen.

Youth: Young Conservatives, Conservative Students and Conservative Graduates could be merged into one body called Conservative Future. Alternatively, Conservative Future would be an umbrella organisation over separate identities. The party aims to double membership in two years with half the new members under 36.

Women: Programmes will be set up to encourage women to stand as Parliamentary candidates and local parties will be encouraged to have women as 25 per cent of contenders interviewed in first round of the selection process. A Conservative Women's Network should get more women involved in the party.

Constituencies: Resources should be shared among constituencies. In populous urban areas, "city offices" should be set up to coordinate organisations under one agent. In rural areas, some constituency offices should be twinned.

Local government: A "Conservative Councillors' Association" should be set up to coordinate Tories in local government. One councillor would be elected to the board. Communications: A computerised communications network will be set up to increase information between Mr Hague's private office, MPs, Central Office and constituency offices.

Involvement: The Conservative Political Centre, which debates policy and disseminates it to members, will be beefed up into a national policy development forum with direct input into the Leadership.

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Munish Chopra speaking yesterday

Tory boy follows leader's footsteps

By Polly Newton

TWENTY years after the young William Hague made his Conservative conference debut in Blackpool, a 15-year-old boy told the same hall that he hoped to follow in the Tory leader's footsteps.

Munish Chopra, a member of Solihull Young Conservatives, opened his speech with a reference to Mr Hague and his performance at the age of 16. He said: "This young man now leads our party. Today another young man speaks before you. I hope in years to come I can echo his success."

He said he was lucky to have grown up under a Tory Government that had offered educational opportunities he would not otherwise have enjoyed. "Young people do not want to live on handouts from the Government. Young people do not want to be patronised, but we want the opportunity to make something of ourselves. They, I want to grow up in a society which gives the chance to fulfil dreams and ambitions."

PRODUCT RECALL

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Turkish troops kill 500 Kurds

Ankara: Turkish forces have killed 538 Kurdish separatist rebels in a three-week incursion into northern Iraq, Turkish military officials said yesterday. They gave no figure for Turkish losses, but said that four soldiers were wounded.

About 15,000 Turkish troops crossed the border three weeks ago in a push against Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) guerrillas. More than 26,000 people have been killed in the 13-year conflict.

In another incident, 50 guerrillas died when a convoy of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) was reportedly ambushed, apparently by the PKK, south of Arbil. The KDP is allied with Turkey.

A United Nations convoy came under fire near the Turkish border in northern Iraq but there were no casualties, according to a UN spokesman in Baghdad. (Reuters, AFP)

'Mad' widow holds out against US police siege

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

SEPARATIST militiamen from all over America have rallied to the side of a 51-year-old widow in rural Illinois who, refusing to comply with a court order for a psychiatric examination, has barricaded herself in her farmhouse as heavily armed police laid siege outside for the sixteenth successive day.

Up to 50 policemen are attempting to secure the surrender of Shirley Allen, from the town of Robie, near Springfield, whose siblings and stepdaughter won a court order last month that obliges her to take a mental test.

Mrs Allen, who does not doubt her own sanity and who believes that the judge's writ is a manoeuvre to take her farm away from her, slammed the door in the face of the legal officer who tried to serve the papers on her last month.

The police soon arrived — first in one patrol car, then two, and finally 15 — to "coax" her to come out. She refused, spraying them spiritedly with buckshot. Mrs Allen asserts

that since she has broken no law and "done no one no harm", she is entitled to be at liberty. Her arguments have won support from neighbours and friends, many of whom have conducted heated exchanges with police officers.

Since September 22, the police have tried everything to get Mrs Allen out, using tear gas and "bean bag" bullets. Memorably, they even pulled



Allen in an undated family photograph

a Barry Manilow record on their loud hailer, in the hope that the uncanny crooner's music would drive her to turn herself in. Copacabana, however, failed to break her resistance.

The police have now cut off her water, her telephone line and her electricity. Residents are enraged, as are an assortment of separatist militiamen, many of whom have rallied to the scene. One of them, Scott Slinkard, of the Southern Illinois Patriots' League, told ABC television: "We can't tolerate this in our country. Shirley Allen is not a threat. I'm not a threat. Those guys down there in uniforms and tactical suits — now they're the real threat."

Under Illinois law, a judge can commit a person to a mental institution for treatment if it is shown that the person is a danger to himself or others, even if no criminal allegation is involved.

In a case like Mrs Allen's — in which the only way to secure the psychological evi-

dence needed to commit her is for her to take a mental examination — the judge can order her to be examined if he has prima facie evidence to show that such tests would be justified.

The testimony of her relatives, it appears, satisfied the judge. They claimed that Mrs Allen, widowed in 1989, is paranoid and poses "a threat to herself and the public".

Had Mrs Allen been brought in as planned, a psychiatrist at the St John's Hospital in Springfield would have conducted the evaluation and determined whether a commitment was justified.

Don Jackson, a Springfield radio talk show host who has spent days lambasting the police's handling of the case, said: "People are frightened that this could happen to them."

Mrs Allen has also received support from the American Civil Liberties Union, which points out that commitment law is frequently abused by relatives for financial gain.



Babes in arms: Four-month-old orangutans hold each other at a rehabilitation centre in Kalimantan on the Indonesian side of Borneo. The World Wide Fund for Nature estimates that at least 29 orangutans have died because of recent forest fires

WORLD IN BRIEF

Papon defiant over war crimes charges

Bordeaux: Maurice Papon, 87, the former French Cabinet minister accused of sending hundreds of Jews to their deaths during the Second World War, was consigned to a Bordeaux prison cell last night to await the start of his trial today for alleged crimes against humanity (Ben Macintyre writes). The former civil servant remained defiant as he turned himself in at Gradien Prison, outside Bordeaux, on the eve of the trial.

M Papon accused the prosecution of "falsifying history", and condemned the trial as "a masquerade unworthy of a law-abiding nation". Under French law, in such serious cases the accused is usually required to remain in prison throughout the trial, but at today's initial hearing, defence lawyers are expected to argue M Papon should be released on bail because of his age and ill health. M Papon's lawyer has claimed that his client will not be able to withstand the strain of a three-month trial if he is forced to stay in jail.

400 die in Sri Lanka battle

Colombo: More than 400 people died in two days of heavy fighting as Sri Lankan troops trying to capture a key northern highway fought off attacks by Tamil Tiger rebels. The Defence Ministry said about 350 rebels and 64 soldiers, including four officers, died in the battle to capture the highway linking the government-held front-line town of Vavuniya to Jaffna peninsula. The fighting occurred as troops advanced towards Manikulam, 165 miles northeast of Colombo. The ministry said the rebels were having difficulty taking out their dead and wounded after the military blocked key road links. The rebel death toll was based on intercepted Tiger radio transmissions and bodies on the battlefield, officials said. (Reuters)

Police reforms under fire

Brussels: Jean-Luc Dehaene, right, the Belgian Prime Minister, set out his Government's plans for streamlining the country's three police forces, whose reputations are at a low ebb over a series of mishandled child rape and murder cases. But, even before the ink was dry on the well-leaked plan, a typical Belgian compromise, it came under attack from police, magistrates, politicians and the media, who denounced it as either muddled or inadequate, or both. (Reuters)



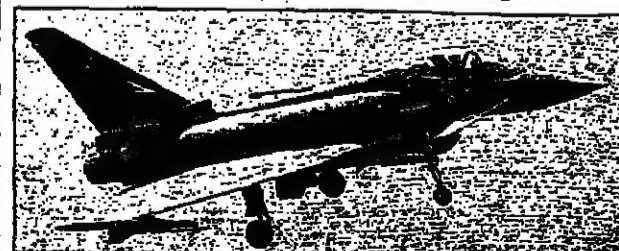
Labour reassures Gibraltar

Gibraltar: During the first visit by a British minister since the May general election, Douglas Henderson, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, assured Gibraltarians that Britain remains committed to the future of the Rock (Dominique Searle writes). He is not expected to announce any change in policy. Last month Ken Purchase, parliamentary private secretary to Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, angered some opposition politicians when he said Spain, as well as Britain and Gibraltar, held the key to a solution of the disputed sovereignty issue.

Nazis 'stole £5.3bn in gold'

Los Angeles: Nazi Germany stole at least \$8.5 billion (£5.3 billion) in gold at today's prices — about \$1.5 billion more than previously believed — from its own citizens, Europe's Jews and the treasuries of the countries it occupied, according to a report by Sidney Zabindoff, an international economist, published by the World Jewish Congress. The report said that Switzerland was the first stop for 85 per cent of the \$5.2 billion in gold that Germany sent out of the country during the war. (Reuters)

Bonn set to buy Eurofighter



The German Government is expected to approve the purchase of 180 Eurofighter combat aircraft, above, at a cost of DM235 billion (£85 billion) at a crucial Cabinet meeting today (Michael Evans writes). Yesterday the Free Democrats (FDP), the junior partner in Government, said it would back the aircraft programme since the Eurofighter was vital for Germany's defence and would promote European co-operation in other high-technology projects. In the past, the FDP has been split over Eurofighter. Even if Cabinet approval is forthcoming, the final hurdle will come next month when the Bundestag will vote on Germany's continued participation in a programme it threatened to leave two years ago.

High-voltage protest

Tirane: Three towns in southern Albania suffered a four-hour blackout after a man who had failed to cross into Greece threatened to hang himself from a high-voltage pylon. Police ordered the power supply to be turned off while villagers tried to tempt Nezim Lisi, 19, down with bread and water. The police finally enticed him off the pylon with promises of either a job in the police or papers to reach Greece. (Reuters)

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8 1997

Emotions tell as Foale recalls Mir collision

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

IT TAKES a lot to puncture the steel nerves of Michael Foale, but memories of a near-fatal collision in space left the British-born astronaut struggling for words yesterday.

Returning finally to the Kennedy Space Centre after more than four months on board the Mir Russian space station, Dr Foale offered his first public assessment of the incident in which an unmanned resupply ship collided with the ageing craft.

Loyal to the last about his blighted mission and fellow cosmonauts, the astronaut nonetheless was unable to conceal the profound effect on the crew of the accident in June, the worst in Mir's 11-year history.

Dr Foale said that Vasili Tsibilyev, the former Russian commander of Mir, had blamed himself for the incident when he used a remote control device to steer the Progress resupply ship into the Spektr science module, piercing its airtight solar panels.

Commander Tsibilyev, initially blamed for the accident by officials at the Belkonur cosmodrome, was further swathed in self-guilt after he recognised that an irregular heartbeat would prevent him from making an essential spacewalk to begin repairs on the damaged module.

The cosmonaut was effectively cleared of personal responsibility by an official

inquiry last week but Dr Foale recounted his colleague's feelings as the most memorable moment of the voyage. "He felt responsible for the whole accident... which I don't quite feel," said Dr Foale, 40, who, suddenly choked by emotion and unable to continue, added: "No, this is too hard to talk about."

It was the first sign of a crack in the otherwise resolute and good-humoured armour that has been Dr Foale's seemingly constant public face since he blasted off into orbit in May. During his 145 days in space, Dr Foale, who has a PhD in astrophysics from Cambridge, had endured a catalogue of errors ranging from the collision to constant technical failures, including

the removal of a critical computer cable that left Mir drifting in orbit without power or heating.

In the final ignominy, his return trip to Earth had been delayed by a day after thick clouds prevented Atlantis, the US space shuttle, from landing at Cape Canaveral as scheduled on Sunday night.

Wearing a Stars and Stripes baseball cap, sitting in front of his wife, Rhonda, and clutching the couple's two children, Jenna said Ian, he said that his first goal was to learn how to walk again after the weightlessness of space. "I don't feel particularly heavy but I am a little uncertain in terms of walking and balance," he said. "I probably want to get strong enough to go outside and walk

... I am very glad to be holding these children."

Ian, three, has learnt to talk while his father has been in orbit. Dr Foale described him as a "rebel" and said Jenna, a giggling five-year-old, had become a "little lady" in the time he had spent away from home.

While his wife, a former NASA geologist, had bought copious supplies of his favourite hamburgers to barbecue at their home at Galveston Bay, outside Houston, Dr Foale had already spent his delayed hours on board the space shuttle ordering his first proper meal in four months. By the time that Atlantis had glided to a halt, NASA had prepared a vegetable lasagna, pizza with every topping available and chocolate-chip cookies.

The Foales, who are planning a windsurfing holiday in Mexico as soon as the NASA debriefings are complete, were visibly relieved to be together. "I am looking forward to a vacation in the sun and getting a tan," Dr Foale said. "After that, who knows? Europe or Russia maybe."

Cargo delay: An unmanned cargo craft loaded with refuse was detached from Mir a day late yesterday. Mission Control blamed the delay on the crew forgetting to detach a locking device. The replacement cargo craft, carrying oxygen, fuel, water and scientific equipment, is scheduled to dock with Mir today. (Reuters)



Rhonda Foale, with a poster featuring a tool kit to welcome her husband home from his Mir mission



Michael Foale hugs his children, Ian and Jenna, at the Kennedy Space Centre

Mossad inquiry branded as fraud

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

LEADING members of Israel's left-wing Opposition yesterday dismissed as a "fraud and whitewash" the Government's move to set up a commission to investigate last month's bungled Mossad plot to assassinate a Hamas leader in Jordan.

In a blistering attack on Binyamin Netanyahu, the right-wing Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, the newly appointed head of the main opposition Labour Party, said: "It is impossible to sleep at night when this is the manner of decision-making in the Prime Minister's office." Mr Barak, Israel's most decorated soldier, who once acted as Mr Netanyahu's commander in an elite anti-terrorist unit, added: "This is not a partisan subject. It is a matter of national responsibility. The Prime Minister's wretched decision in the matter of the action in Amman caused serious damage to our relations with Jordan, the exposure of Mossad's operational methods, Israel's exposure to reprisal acts of terror and the weakening of the struggle against terror."

Mr Netanyahu pledged that his three-man commission would conduct a full investigation. But opposition politicians and some leading members of the security establishment complained that it would lack the teeth of an independent inquiry headed by a judge.

Appeal by Prodi for Communist backing

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE Italian Prime Minister, Professor Romano Prodi, yesterday struggled to save his 18-month-old Centre-Left Government from collapse, making an emotional appeal to his Communist allies in parliament to back him over his "budget for Europe". The fall of the Prodi administration could lead to new elections, a grand coalition or a caretaker government.

"The country will not understand if our Communist allies, who have given us their backing for 500 days, make a political crisis into a government crisis by voting against a budget based on investment, job creation and reform of the welfare state," Signor Prodi declared in an hour-long speech opening the debate on the 1998 budget.

"This is a decisive moment for Italy and Europe," the Prime minister said. He was given a standing ovation by the moderate Left, but Fausto Bertinotti, the leader of Communist Refoundation, sat impassively.

The Government depends on the 35 Refoundation MPs for its parliamentary majority. Signor Bertinotti said

after six hours of crisis talks with Signor Prodi on Monday night that the Government's responses to Communist demands had been "totally inadequate", and there would have to be "substantial modifications" to the budget, with further guarantees on pensions, health spending, and unemployment. But he said there was "still time for negotiation".

Yesterday, Signor Bertinotti said the price for joining Europe was too high if it meant welfare cuts which damaged working people. But he left the door open for further talks by asking Signor Prodi to give him "a sign" that he was willing to meet some of the Communists' demands.

The draft 1998 budget, which includes 6.8 billion of welfare cuts, is crucial to Italy's hopes of qualifying for the European single currency by reducing the budget deficit to 3 per cent of gross domestic product, as required by the Maastricht treaty.

Hopes for a compromise with the Communists centre on proposals for a 35-hour week, and for job creation in the backward South.

THE TIMES/DILLONS FORUM

An evening with P.D. James

P.D. James, Britain's most popular crime novelist, will discuss her highly successful career, her life as a writer and her characters, including the famous Commander Adam Dalglish - the subject of a major TV series - in The Times/Dillons forum on Thursday, October 23. Chaired by Peter Stothard, Editor of The Times, the forum also offers the opportunity for the audience to put questions to P.D. James. The forum marks the publication of her new book *A Certain Justice* (Faber and Faber) and will be held at the Institute of Education, 29 Bedford Way, London WC1. Tickets are £10 (concession £7.50) which includes £2 off the price of the book. Subject to demand this event will be interpreted by sign language.



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Jospin's broken vows reap fury of unions

RENCH rail workers last night mounted the first big strike of the autumn to bolster demands for a cut in the working week before an employment conference that will present the four-month-old Socialist Government with its toughest challenge so far.

The four main unions of the state-owned SNCF rail network called the 36-hour strike, due to end tomorrow morning, to press for higher wages, additional jobs and improved working conditions, but the key bone of contention is the row over whether the Government will fulfil its election promise to reduce the working week from 39 hours to 35.

SNCF officials said the strike would not affect Eurostar trains between London and Paris, but high-speed TGV routes, regional and suburban services are likely to be cut by up to two thirds today. Paris is expected to be most seriously affected, with a series of Metro strikes.

Lionel Jospin, the Prime Minister, has appeared to back off from promises to cut the working week without loss of pay. He even described the 35-hour slogan as "anti-economic".

That stance has encouraged business leaders and boosted the stock market, but it has provoked anger among M. Jospin's Communist coalition allies and left the more militant

French rail workers are striking to back campaign for shorter hours, writes Ben Macintyre in Paris

unions threatening mass action unless the measure is introduced immediately. With France facing a crippling unemployment level of 12.5 per cent, many economists argue that reducing the working week without loss of earnings is economic suicide. Government officials have predicted it would create more than a million new jobs, but employers say it would discourage businesses from hiring more workers and put a brake on the economy just as growth is recovering.

"Switching to 35 hours is like awarding another five weeks of holiday. It would

EU job targets rejected

Luxembourg: Governments of European Union states have rejected proposals to target the creation of 12 million jobs in five years and cut Europe's jobless rate from 10.7 to 7 per cent.

Employment and social affairs ministers from the 15 EU states yesterday expressed concern that the adoption of headline targets would raise false expecta-

tions that could lead to a popular backlash if the ambitious objectives are not met. The ministers did, however, broadly back a Commission proposal for every unemployed adult to be offered a job or training place within 12 months of becoming jobless (six months for unemployed youth). EU leaders will discuss employment at a November 21 summit. (AFP)

German blow, page 31

sibly accompanied by a pay freeze for several years.

Today's strike will be seen as a crucial test of union strength, but the issue of working hours is only one of several areas in which left-wingers have accused M. Jospin of reneging on his campaign promises. His decision to reform the previous Government's tough immigration laws — contrasting with his earlier vow to abolish them completely — has led to charges of hypocrisy from the French "moral left".

Last week, more than 1,000 intellectuals and artists launched a petition calling on M. Jospin to scrap the laws. However, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the Interior Minister, has refused to grant residence permits to all 90,000 immigrant applicants.

A government-appointed committee has recommended liberalising the rules on political asylum and restoring the right of citizenship to anyone born in France. A draft immigration law will be unveiled next week.

Since his surprise election in June, M. Jospin has retained high popularity ratings. But as the signs of dissent mount, the harsh reality of the contradictions between M. Jospin's promises and his capacity to honour them are becoming more apparent.



Khaldei: photographed war's fiercest fighting

Creator of Soviet icon dies at 80

Moscow: Yevgeny Khaldei, the man who took one of the most celebrated pictures of the Second World War, showing a Soviet soldier raising his national flag over the Reichstag in Berlin, died yesterday at the age of 80 (Robin Lodge writes).

Mr Khaldei, an army photographer who survived four years of some of the most bitter fighting of the war, from the German invasion in 1941 to the final crushing of the Third Reich, became one of the best-known photographers of the postwar period, despite being sacked twice for being Jewish. He photographed every Russian Communist leader from Stalin, but received no royalties.



The famed Khaldei image of the Soviet soldier on top of the Reichstag in 1945

Wealthy Russians asked to aid poor

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

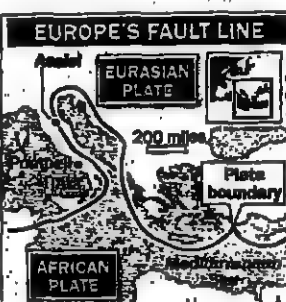
RED CROSS officials yesterday called on Russia's new wealthy to dig into their pockets to help an estimated 31 million people — more than a fifth of the population — living below the poverty line. It is feared many may not survive the winter.

At the launch of the Red Cross Winter Emergency Appeal, Boris Iorov, Vice-President of the Russian Red Cross, said it was time the country's rich assumed their social responsibilities. "We keep hearing from the bankers about the need to build a civilised society. Those bankers should be here now, because this is a real chance to build that society."

The appeal, which is being organised by the Russian Red Cross and the Geneva-based International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, aims to draw attention to a humanitarian crisis being faced this winter by Russia and the former Soviet republics of Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. It hopes to raise \$15 million (£9.3 million) — \$10 million of which would go to Russia. While a proportion of this sum will be provided by Red Cross societies abroad, the emphasis is on Russia helping itself.

Living standards in the former Soviet Union have plummeted since the collapse of state welfare and guaranteed employment. According to the World Bank, consumer prices rose in Russia by nearly 400 per cent a year between 1990 and 1995, leaving pensioners and the growing numbers of unemployed unable to make ends meet. Healthcare, starved of government funding, has deteriorated to the point of catastrophe. Infant mortality last year reached 20 per 1,000 live births, while the number of reported cases of tuberculosis more than doubled to 111,075 between 1990 and 1996. Average life expectancy for men is 59.

According to a Russian government survey, more than half the people in Khakasia, a region of southern Siberia, picked out as needing special assistance, are living below the official minimum standard. In one district more than 530 children did not go to school last winter because of a lack of warm clothes.



Fears for Rome as new quake rocks Italy

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

CENTRAL Italy was struck by an earthquake yesterday, the fourth in ten days. The tremor was felt in Rome, where seismologists said ancient monuments and art treasures could be at risk.

Maria Piro, a leading geologist, said much of Rome was built on an underground warren of tunnels, caves and catacombs, many of them unmapped. She said there was already serious subsidence in many parts of Rome, which would worsen if the epicentre moved closer.

The earthquake, registering 4.9 on the Richter scale, caused further damage to the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi, and sent people in nearby Perugia running into the streets. Two women in Marche were injured when they jumped out of windows. The earthquake, which like the previous three had its epicentre in Umbria, struck at 1.23am. "Ten seconds of terror" was the headline in yesterday's *Corriere della Sera*. The tremor coincided with the first torrential rains of the autumn, bringing further misery to thousands of people forced to sleep under canvas in prefabricated huts or in their cars.

Enzo Boschi, of the National Geophysics Institute, said it was significant that the earthquakes were not only powerful but were continuing unabated instead of dying away. "There are few precedents for this in Italy," he said.

Father Nicola Giannantonio, the bishop at the Assisi basilica, said the latest earthquake brought down masonry from the ceiling of the Upper Church, although the medieval frescoes that were damaged in the first earthquake on September 26 did not appear to have suffered further harm.

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BRITAIN'S BIGGEST ELECTRICAL STORES

Montenegro poll protest

Podgorica: Milo Djukanovic, the Montenegrin opposition leader, is to protest to the election commission about polling irregularities in Sunday's presidential ballot (James Pettifer writes).

In the poll, Momir Bulatovic, the incumbent President who backs Slobodan Milosevic, the Yugoslav President, gained a higher than expected tally in the result that was a near dead heat. A run-off election will be held on October 19. Montenegro is a junior partner in the Yugoslav Federation dominated by Serbia.

Opposition claims of electoral manipulation are hard to verify. What is known is that the pro-Belgrade camp "encouraged" thousands of Montenegrin émigrés to return to vote. Some returnees were Serbs with Montenegrin residence papers. Their participation triggered protests as Montenegrins feel powerless against Mr Milosevic.

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Gallery vows to expose fake Van Gogh art

FROM SUSAN BELL
IN PARIS

AMID recent claims that many paintings by Vincent Van Gogh hanging in some of the world's most famous galleries are fakes, the Musée d'Orsay announced yesterday that it will investigate the collection of Dr Gachet, who looked after the painter during the weeks before his suicide in 1890.

The museum has promised to make public the results of the detailed study, which will include infra-red reflectography and ultra-violet authenticity tests, and will next year exhibit the paintings donated by the doctor and his children, including disputed works such as the *Portrait of Doctor Gachet* and the artist's only etching, *The Man with the Pipe*.

The decision comes a month after the French magazine *Connaissance de l'Art* published an article claiming that the *Portrait of Doctor Gachet*, owned by the Musée d'Orsay, was a fake, was possibly painted by the doctor's son, Paul. Yesterday Bernard Lantier, a French art expert interviewed in *Le Figaro*, argued that *The Man with the Pipe*, the original of which is also part of the museum's Van Gogh collection, was another "appalling forgery".

The Van Gogh fake-ris began last autumn when scholars cited in an article in the *Art Newspaper* questioned the authenticity of up to 100 Van Gogh works.

The Musée d'Orsay has a collection of 23 paintings by Van Gogh, including his masterpiece *Vincent's Room in Arles*, *Self-Portrait* and *The Church at Auvers-sur-Oise*. The two latter works are also from the collection of Dr Gachet, but their authenticity has never been in doubt.

Anne Distel, the museum's curator, said yesterday that she was keeping an open mind. "It would be extremely imprudent to respond too quickly to this sort of controversial debate. We cannot prejudge things now," she said.

Although Van Gogh died destitute, his paintings were already fetching huge sums only 20 years after his death. As his work did not sell in his lifetime there is virtually no commercial proof of authorship. To make matters even more complicated, a number of works were abandoned or given away. Forgers' efforts were also undoubtedly helped by letters Van Gogh wrote to his brother, Theo, describing the progress of his work in great detail.

Senator in outburst at 'concealed donation videos'

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE chairman of the Senate committee investigating alleged political fundraising abuses yesterday exploded in frustration at the White House for "concealing and concealing" in its disclosure of controversial videotapes of President Clinton's coffee mornings.

Fred Thompson, a Tennessee Republican, said: "The ultimate question is why, at this late date, after so many specific requests, are we just now getting these tapes?" In an impassioned half-hour chronicle of his rising frustration, he said: "It is clear the White House is trying to run out the clock on this committee."

The target of his fury was the White House's release this week of 44 tapes of coffee mornings which Republicans allege broke rules against fundraising on federal property. Mr Thompson said he had first asked the White House for details of these events in April, and had made further requests in August.

The revelation of the tapes' existence late last week turned up the heat of the Senate's flagging hearings, which must finish by the end of the year.

The White House says that the tapes are not incriminating, and simply show the President shaking hands with Democratic supporters.

Mr Thompson, a former film actor, called for the committee room lights to be dimmed, declaring "Let's roll that tape", as the images flickered onto giant screens in front of the packed committee room. Although the sound is

muffled and the images banal, in a town where the Watergate tapes which destroyed President Nixon still loom in the collective memory, the revelation of secret recordings provokes an inevitable frisson. The key questions the "coffee tapes" raise are whether the President knew these were fundraising events and whether they took place in residential or official parts of the White House.

Republicans on the committee also hit out at Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, for her refusal to appoint an independent prosecutor, calling for her to testify on Capitol Hill or for the President to replace her. In matching outbursts, marking the emphatic end of the committee's attempt at bipartisan harmony, Democrats accused Republicans of stonewalling over evidence.

They also defended Ms Reno, with Robert Torricelli, a New Jersey Democrat, calling her "a woman of integrity". He added that she was in an impossible position: "she would be accused of protecting the President if she did not appoint an independent counsel, and of being browbeaten by Republicans if she did."

The explosion from both sides eclipsed the scheduled star of the show, Harold Ickes, the former White House Deputy Chief of Staff, often described as "the ultimate insider" and the "man who really knows". There was not even time to swear in Mr Ickes, who watched in silence as co-sponsors hurled accusations at each other.

The Senate prepared to vote later yesterday on the McCain-Feingold Bill, the only proposal to reform campaign finance rules which stands a chance of becoming law. However, in a day of classic Senate manoeuvring, it appeared that Democrats and moderate Republicans had failed to assemble the necessary 60 votes to curtail a filibuster — the ability of any opponent to talk out the Bill. In an impromptu statement yesterday, Mr Clinton called for reform of the rules, attacking the "fundraising arms race which has overwhelmed and consumed both parties".



Thompson: frustrated by White House moves



Brad Pitt starring in *Seven Years in Tibet*. Revelations about his character's Nazi past have prompted protests from China and Jews

Nazi taints Hollywood's Tibet crusade

FROM GILES WHITFIELD
IN LOS ANGELES

LOOKING tough, blond and devilishly handsome, Brad Pitt will return to America's cinema screens tonight in a Tibetan mountaineering epic. The true narrative has prompted awkward revelations about his character's Nazi past and embroiled Hollywood producers in rows with China.

Seven Years in Tibet, filmed in the Argentine Andes, depicts a daring escape by Heinrich Harrer, an Austrian prisoner of war, during the Second World War to the Himalayan kingdom. He befriends the Dalai Lama and served as his tutor until 1952.

To the consternation of Sony Pictures, the film studio, Herr Harrer, now 84, admitted in May to having voluntarily joined Hitler's *Sturmabteilung* (Stormtroopers) in 1933. Five years later he enlisted as a sports sergeant in the SS, received Himmler's permission to marry in 1938, and was once photographed being congratulated by Hitler for an Alpine climbing feat.

The confession led to urgent damage-limitation efforts by Jean-Jacques Annaud, the film's French director. "This is the story of a bastard who undergoes a drastic transformation into an incredible human being," he said. "What he did was accept the trend of his day... a social decision, not a political one."

But Jewish and Chinese leaders have refused to let the



Heinrich Harrer, a self-confessed Nazi, with the Dalai Lama in Austria in 1992

issue die. Rabbi Abraham Cooper, of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles, said that millions of fans of Brad Pitt would see the film and it would give neo-Nazis an opportunity "to try to whitewash crimes of the Nazi era".

The *People's Daily*, the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party, was gleeful by comparison. Noting that the film was based on Herr Harrer's autobiography, it said: "The Tibet cause set off by Hollywood is being used by a Nazi to advertise him-

self." *Seven Years in Tibet* is being released barely three weeks before President Jiang Zemin of China makes his first state visit to the United States. It is the first of three major films this season either to idolise the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual and temporal leader, or demonise China, which invaded Tibet in 1949.

Kundun, a film biography of the Dalai Lama being made by Martin Scorsese for Disney studio, has jeopardised the company's plans to expand into China. Work on a

Disney theme park in Shanghai has been frozen, and a Foreign Ministry spokesman took the opportunity to declare that "Tibet has been Chinese territory since ancient times". Any distortion of that view would be seen as "wrong... and unpatriotic".

Next month, MGM plans to release *Red Corner*, a contemporary thriller about Beijing's Intermediate Court, dreaded for handing down death sentences which human rights activists say are often carried out within a week. Its star is Richard Gere, a practising Buddhist and close friend of the Dalai Lama who is credited with starting Hollywood's love affair with the idea of a free Tibet.

Anticipating Chinese censure, MGM's president of worldwide marketing has been at pains to argue that *Red Corner* is not "in any way, shape or form a political movie... it's about a man caught in a legal system".

But Gere's plans belie this view. He has persuaded the studio to rush forward the film's release to the day President Jiang arrives in Washington, and will host a "stateless dinner" there on the evening the Chinese leader dines at the White House.

China has retaliated by producing films of its own on Tibet, including a \$1.7 million (£1 million) feature about an aggressive 19th-century British mission to Tibet and a documentary portraying the Dalai Lama as a collaborator with Beijing. Last year Chinese authorities also banned Hollywood notables including Pitt, Annaud, Scorsese and Harrison Ford from visiting Tibet.

Chinese attempts to rewrite Hollywood's version of Tibetan history are likely to fail. The tragic story of the 1949 invasion — since then 6,000 monasteries have been looted and 1.2 million Tibetans killed, according to human rights sources — has proved as irresistible to film-makers as the Tibetan backdrop of soaring mountains and monks in saffron robes.

Meat firm swindler let ex-wife live off fat of the land

FROM GILES WHITFIELD
IN LOS ANGELES

A JAPANESE meat-processing executive has been sentenced to five years in an American jail for what is thought to be the biggest series of embezzlements in US corporate history.

Yasuyoshi Kato pleaded guilty to

siphoning up to \$100 million (£62.5 million) over seven years from the corporate accounts of his food-processing firm — but he claimed that 90 per cent of the money went to satisfy his estranged wife's insatiable appetite for clothes, shoes, cars, homes, exotic pets, and money-losing businesses. Kato separated from Doris Ann Beiler-

Hotomi in 1991 but agreed to annual support payments of \$600,000, even though his salary was \$150,000 a year and his net worth \$200,000.

He obtained the money by writing company cheques to himself and then, as the company's chief financial officer, arranging business loans to cover them. Auditors scrambling to recover

assets after Kato and his wife applied in vain for bankruptcy protection have found that he owned 12 homes, including a beachfront condominium and a \$9 million ranch. While her husband appears to have escaped lightly — he faced up to 76 years' jail — Ms Beiler-Hotomi is being sued for \$95 million by his old employer.

Kennedy 'suspected wife of affair with Onassis'

New claims threaten to further tarnish a legend, writes Tom Rhodes

PRESIDENT Kennedy suspected that his wife, Jackie, was sleeping with Aristotle Onassis in revenge for his own philandering, according to a new book which claims Kennedy sometimes invited prostitutes to the White House.

"She's getting back at me 'cause I have so many," Mr Kennedy reportedly told a friend about his wife's alleged early affair with her future husband. "I resent it. He's an ugly Greek."

In a *Vanity Fair* article, Seymour Hersh, the Pulitzer-prize winning investigative journalist, has disclosed details from *The Dark Side of Camelot*, his latest book to be published next month.

Prostitutes were allegedly procured for Kennedy by a senior aide who threatened them to ensure their silence. "The guy was really into some kinky stuff. The stuff that I have is purely salacious — you can fill books with it," Hersh, who gained fame for uncovering the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, told the magazine.

The book has already provoked much controversy in the United States. Papers said to prove that Kennedy made a \$1 million (£625,000) deal with Marilyn Monroe to conceal their alleged affair were

deemed fake at the eleventh hour by Hersh. Despite abandoning these documents, Hersh has still discovered much that appears to be worth telling. Numerous informants have spoken to him and claimed that organised crime played a decisive role in the 1960 presidential election. First, gangsters allegedly helped Kennedy to gain the nomination by using laundered cash during the West Virginia primary. Later the Mob apparently used the threat of force to bolster support for Kennedy in the election, not just in Illinois, as had been previously alleged, but in six other states as well. Later, the magazine reports, Robert Kennedy, then Attorney-General, "fixed the cases" of hoodlums who had helped in the election.

The book also claims that Bobby Kennedy was enthusiastic about using mobsters in plots against President Castro of Cuba. Far from opposing the plots by the CIA to use gangsters against Señor Castro, he is quoted by a senior intelligence official as saying: "You're using the wrong gangster. I'm going to show you how it's done."

Hersh claims he has other "very serious" disclosures to make on Kennedy's foreign policy. The material he has covered ranges from the Cuban missile crisis to a proposed joint attack with the Soviet Union on the Chinese nuclear centre at Lop Nhor. Khrushchev apparently got cold feet.

The author also claims to have cables linking Kennedy to the assassination of Ngo Dinh Diem, the South Vietnamese President, in 1963.

But Hersh told the magazine that readers of his book would be most interested in what he has discovered about Marilyn Monroe and Robert Kennedy.

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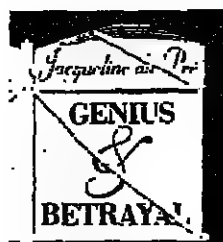
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It couldn't have not happened



Kiffer Finzi felt it was essential to his sister-in-law's stability that he sleep with her. Interview by Sandra Parsons

What sort of man would sleep with his wife's sister, with his wife's knowledge, while she shared their home? That is what Kiffer Finzi did for 16 months between 1971 and 1972 while his sister-in-law, Jacqueline du Pré, was on the brink of a nervous breakdown.

It was a secret that Jacqueline's sister Hilary, Kiffer's wife, kept for 25 years but has now chosen to reveal in a memoir written with her brother, Piers du Pré. It is an intensely moving portrayal, but predictably, they have already been roundly condemned in print — by people who have never met them, nor read the full book, extracts from which are being serialised this week in *The Times*.

So great have been the inaccuracies written about them elsewhere that Kiffer has now decided to give his side of the story. It was not an easy decision for him because, contrary to what you might expect, he is not an arrogant man. Rather, he is a man without self-doubt, a security he attributes directly to his childhood and in particular to his mother, Joy Finzi, who had an extraordinary talent, he says, for "turning negative situations into positive ones".

And in a way, that is exactly what her son attempted to do when Jacqueline, a mass of despair, fled from her husband, Daniel Barenboim, and their demanding, jet-setting life of international recitals, and sought sanctuary with Hilary.

By then, Hilary and Kiffer had been married ten years. They lived in the tranquil village of Ashmansworth, Hampshire, in the sprawling farmhouse that is still their home today, with their four young children. Hilary's grandmother and Joy.

In contrast to Kiffer's secure childhood, Hilary, Jacqueline and Piers's was, although immensely loving, terribly sheltered. Their father, Derek, was "hypersensitive", says Kiffer, to the point where he eventually became so paralysed by fear of the outside world that he could not speak above a whisper.

Their mother, Iris, was also uncomfortable with what she perceived as the dangerous landscape outside the confines of the music world. In consequence, when Jacqueline dared to explore that landscape, it elated and terrified her.

"I think coming down to Ashmansworth was probably a very pathetic, sad way of Jackie trying to find something to hold on to," says Kiffer. "She was a very big personality and she needed a big space. But having broken out, having climbed over the fence, as it were, she found there was nothing to stand on."

"They all had an incredibly close childhood, but in a way it made progress difficult. Jackie was terribly vulnerable; they all are, because they have retained this sort of child-like directness. They couldn't tell a lie to save their faces. The ability to say one thing and think another is outside their ken."

It was because Hilary had managed to make a firm base for herself that Jacqueline came to her, he believes. But Hilary was still rather timorous, and Jacqueline, who was boisterous and earthy and who delighted in being ribald if she thought it would cause a reaction, needed someone who would not be overwhelmed by her. That someone was Kiffer.

In him she found the only person she had ever met who was as strong as her. Which is not very well, but why did he agree — at Jacqueline's insistent demand — to go to bed with her?

'Looking back, the sexual side is the least important'

"It was very much part of her whole personality. Jackie gave on the moment and she didn't consider rights and wrongs. If she had, she could never have played the Elgar the way she did. If she'd had to think about what the form was or what mode it was in, she wouldn't have been able to do it. Sexuality is very important for everybody and yet we all try to wrap it in cottonwool and try to make it go into channels. Jackie didn't do that."

"I'm not saying it was temptation, because Jackie wasn't one of the world's great beauties, although the photographs tried to make her so, they evened out her teeth and made them white instead of yellow and so on."

But her sexuality was just part of her personality and for a while we were absolutely eyeball to eyeball. The funny thing is, looking back on it now, from my point of view the sexual side is the least important side of it."

What was important, then? "Coming to grips with her personality. And in a way, what helped was that I didn't have any demands, to make of her. She was free to say what she liked and it wouldn't upset me, because I don't think I had any expectations. But she was a wonderful personality."

"She was terribly modest, she had no opinion of herself at all. She was deeply generous and very considerate. You'll say she wasn't considerate to Hilary, but that was only because that was outside her wavelength. There wasn't really a barrier, from her point of view, between her and Hilary, but it's terribly difficult to explain because it doesn't fit in with ordinary perceptions."



Kiffer Finzi: "I think in the long run it's been a good thing for Hilary. She was very dependent on me and it's made her slightly less so"

And neither, it has to be said, does Kiffer. He combines compassion with total honesty, and the effect is as disarming as it is unsettling.

He is 62 now and clearly a man at peace with himself. His vivid blue eyes radiate kindness; yet he can sound, at times, quite brutal. His ability to speak the truth stems from his lack of fear: he does not mind that thousands of people now know intimate details about him, because he believes absolutely that

what he did was right. "It doesn't bother me at all what people think," he says, equally. "That sounds as though I don't care about anything, which isn't true. It's just that I believe what people think is their business."

He is aware that there are many who will assume he simply took advantage. "But there was such a lot of sorrow and sadness that came with it. It wasn't just a little bit of fun on the side. I couldn't have not happened. I had hoped to head

Jackie off, in a sense. To give her something — not me, I don't think I had any personal ambition in this — something that would help her."

But in the end what really helped her was psychoanalysis. A friend of Kiffer's gave him R.D. Laing's *Sanity, Madness and the Family*; Kiffer had never heard of Laing, but within a week had read all his books and then moved on to Jung.

"It was only after this that I realised that I might become a hindrance, rather than a help, and that it would be helpful for her to see someone professionally."

Why had he not realised that sooner? "Because I was blind. And I don't think it would have worked for Jackie any sooner. I'd come to grips with Jackie's grief and despair. You couldn't help but feel compassion. If you look at it as bed-hopping, then that limited vision pulls the whole thing down. But anyone in that situation would have been, I think, really compelled. You would have had to have

been an absolute moron not to realise that here was someone at the extremities of despair."

"Funny enough, at the time it didn't feel wrong. There was one time when it all got too much for Hilary and she went out to weep, just as she had done when they were small at the Purley Festival and Jackie had been acclaimed as such a talent. That was Hilary's way of coping with it. She coped with it, and in coping, she developed music."

"Jackie didn't impose the stress purposefully, she was just being herself. She didn't feel guilty about what she was doing at all. Because to have guilt, you have got to think backwards or forwards and Jackie couldn't do that. She lived absolutely in the moment. She probably loved Hil more than anyone in the world, she was utterly devoted to her, just as Hil was to her. They were a very, very close pair."

The only time Jacqueline came near thinking backwards, as he puts it, was when she was ill and became spiteful towards her much-loved family. Kiffer thinks it was partly because she wanted to shock them still, but largely to do with the effects of multiple sclerosis. What he is certain of is that Iris never, as has been claimed, blamed Jacqueline's illness on the fact that she had married a Jew.

"It's bunkum. Jackie may have been confused and said it, but don't forget she always responded to people, she told them what she thought they wanted to hear. And she could be cruelly vituperative. She told me, for instance, that she knew she should never have married Danny [Barenboim]; she said she knew she was doing the wrong thing at the wedding ceremony. She was terribly vindictive about him. But what I say to that is, look at the photographs of them together. I think you have to believe what you see and not what people say."

For those who wonder about his own marriage, he issues the same invitation: "Just look at us." He never felt he was betraying Hilary. "It wouldn't have occurred to me to leave her. It was just absolutely essential at that point to do this. I don't think Jackie would ever have gone to a psychologist if I hadn't done that. Although as it turned out, it was all futile. But really I think Jackie paid Hilary a tremendous compliment, because when she was desperately looking for someone to latch on to she chose Hil. And Jackie would have done exactly the same for Hilary. I don't think they felt jealousy in that way, either of them."

Their marriage, he thinks, is stronger as a result. "I think in the long run it's been a good thing for Hilary. She was very dependent on me and it's made her slightly less so. And it's cured her of a lot of the basic du Pré fears she had: the fear of the unknown, the fear of what people are thinking of you, the general feeling of threat."

Did he ever feel guilty? "Not really, no. I was always utterly honest. It's terribly difficult, trying to judge it all again, when there was such terrible despair. But I don't think, faced with that despair, one could ever have considered doing anything else."

Major was losing control

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'I was witness to my sister's crucifixion'

In Day Four of the du Pré memoir, Hilary du Pré on Jackie's decline

I don't know how Jackie became reconciled with Danny [Barenboim, the conductor and her husband] but I can only assume that either her confusion subsided or she was better able to cope with it. A month before her 27th birthday, an unscheduled recording session triggered their musical communication again. It was her last visit to a recording studio.

In July they went to Tel Aviv, and in September they played with Pinchas Zukerman at the Royal Festival Hall. Some reviewers remarked that "Miss du Pré is back in great form", although others were less enthusiastic.

Once again, we started to see less and less of her, as she swung back into the vortex of Danny's life: concerts, late-night meals, travelling — all the things she had said she couldn't cope with. I wondered how long it would last.

Early in January 1973, Jackie performed in Toronto. The Canadian press was not ecstatic: this was "good" du Pré but not "exceptional". By the 25th she was back in New York for a chamber concert with Danny. The critics complained of her self-indulgent playing, her rasping tone and that she often missed notes. Jackie had never before had reviews like these.

She had been noticing for some time that her hands were not responding as they should. She constantly felt as

though they hadn't warmed up properly. She consulted various doctors who were anything but helpful.

Her official comeback concert at the Royal Festival Hall had been arranged for February 8. She was to play the Elgar Concerto, conducted by Zubin Mehta. The press announced that she was returning "after a long illness".

As the orchestra took their places I felt apprehensive. The world was out in force to hear Jackie and I realised, for the first time, I didn't feel secure about her.

Jackie appeared, her cello held high in front of her and, as she ran up the steps on to the platform, the audience burst into frenzied applause. She looked happy and relaxed as she beamed at the crowd. There was absolute silence as she slipped into her deep concentration. Then, with a characteristic backward flip of her head, she swung the bow across the strings for the opening chords. The sound rose from the cello and swept across the hall, penetrating every soul.

But the first two leaps were much slower than usual: the orchestra was unprepared and immediately sped ahead of her. I froze. Zubin crouched, his arms braced as he tried to pull the orchestra back. There was an uneasy balance between the orchestra and Jackie as



Daniel Barenboim and Jacqueline du Pré: an unscheduled recording session triggered their musical communication again

they continued out of stride with each other for a few awkward notes. That commanding voice, which had once spoken so directly to my heart, and had ruled my emotions with such power, was now floundering.

The audience hardly made a sound at the end of the first movement. I thought I would snap with the tension.

At first I couldn't identify my unease but gradually I realised that Jackie was telling us something that was too much for us to understand or bear. There had always been hope in this music and in her playing but now all the joy had gone. I was witnessing a crucifixion. In a solemn and final reckoning, all I could hear was my sister's farewell.

That night's performance was a heavy burden. The message was unmistakable. After the final sforzando chord, Zubin's arms flopped to his side and the audience rose to its feet, like a tidal wave. I found myself swept onto my feet, too, and pushed

forward. Jackie's face broke into her huge smile and she stood with her: adoring, but utterly uncomprehending audience at her feet.

No long afterwards, Kiffer and I were invited to lunch with Jackie. She had prepared a meal and we tucked into bowls of steaming soup.

"Jackie, this is delicious," I said. "One of your best."

"Hmmm, I love it," Kiffer enthused. "But it would be even more loveable with salt." Jackie picked up the salt-cellar and tried to pass it across the table, but her arm just bounced in mid-air. "He's over there, Jacks," I joked, but very quickly realised, from her frightened face, that she was not playing around.

go into hospital. On October 16, multiple sclerosis was finally diagnosed.

Jackie's immediate reaction was to telephone Danny but not to tell him the truth. Danny, however, sensed something was wrong, and was soon at her bedside. She was delighted that he had come home, especially knowing that he had put her first.

© Hilary and Piers du Pré 1997

Extracted from *A Genius Family*, by Hilary and Piers du Pré, published by Chatto & Windus at £16.99. Readers can get a copy for £14.99 by calling Times Bookshop on 0900 010 010.

"I'm going to die said Jackie, and they say I'm going to go mad"

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Major was losing control

Anthony Seldon on why John Major put his job on the line

It was a meeting on Tuesday, June 15, 1995 that brought John Major to the point of greatest despair in his premiership. The Eurosceptic Fresh Start Group of MPs met the day after the publication of the second volume of Mrs Thatcher's memoirs, which were critical of Major.

The meeting began amicably enough, with attendees banging desks, albeit perfunctorily. Speaking for a little over ten minutes, Major talked of his determination to maintain the veto obtained at Maastricht, how he would prevent further EU encroachment, and of his concerns about the practicalities of EMU. Those in attendance resented Major for lecturing them.

The meeting came to life when John Townend, chairman of the party's Backbench Finance Committee, asked whether it was not time for the Prime Minister to come off the fence and pronounce that as long as he was at No 10 he would not advise the Commons to accept a single currency. The cheers around the room were the first indication that Major was losing control of the meeting.

Known enemies of Major then joined in, including Norman Lamont, who said that if a single currency was wrong in principle in 1990 it was wrong now, and Sir George Gardiner, who said people yearned for a clear lead. Bill Cash, Iain Duncan Smith and Bernard Jenkin all spoke dismissively of Major's stance.

Major, losing his patience, angered his audience by saying he did not believe the public cared that much about Europe, and soon MPs were shouting disapproval at points being made, and roaring approval at each new Eurosceptic arrow. After an hour, Major walked out of the room, shattered by the most disrespectful meeting he was to attend as Prime Minister. Major was a troubled man when he flew to Canada on

Thursday, June 15 for the G7 meeting at Halifax, Nova Scotia. He had spent a miserable 48 hours since the Fresh Start meeting, turning over in his mind an idea that he had ruminated on the previous year when he felt under great pressure but had rejected after consultations with Douglas Hurd and Sarah Hogg, head of his policy unit. This was the plan of advancing the leadership election from the end of the year to before the summer recess, by triggering the contest himself.

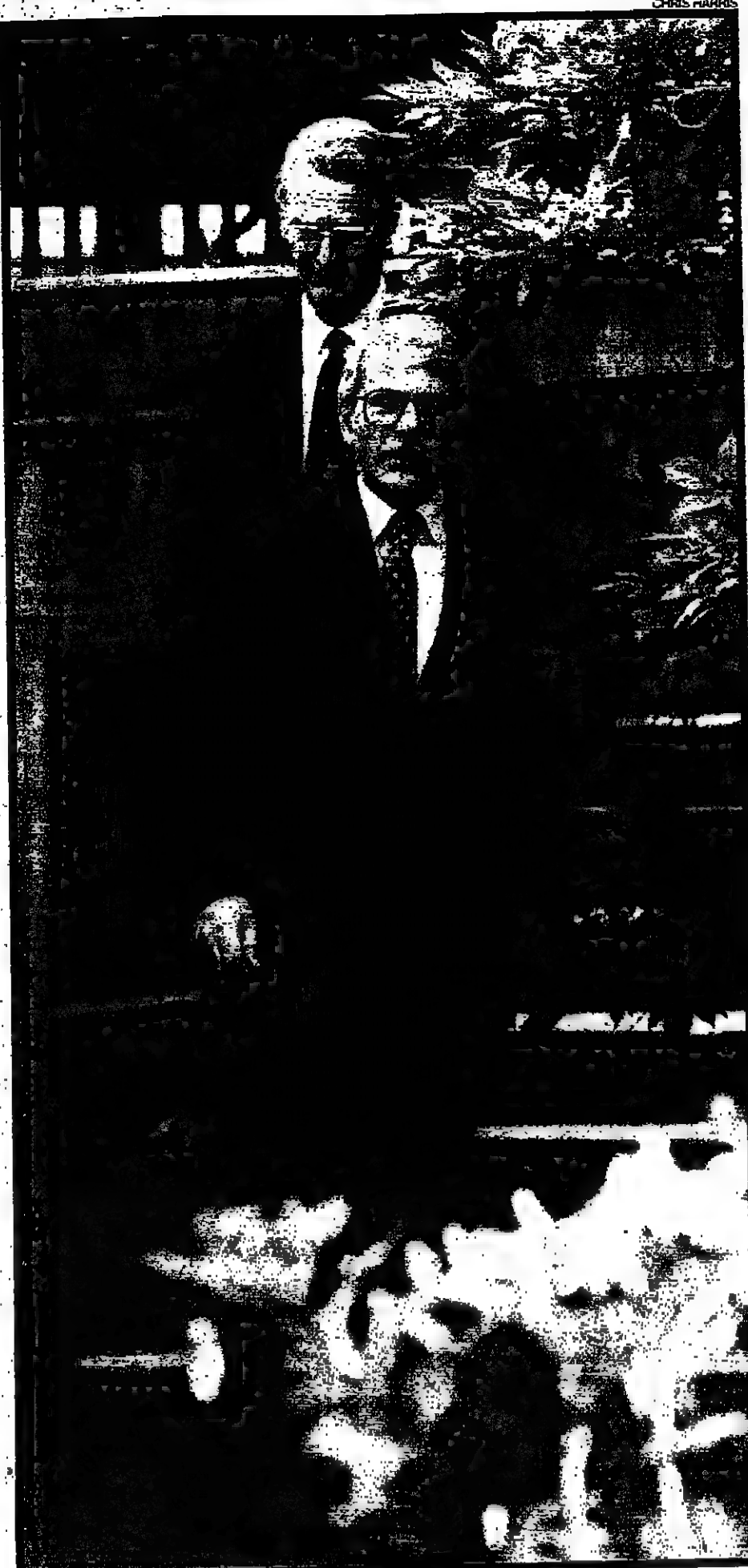
On the flight back home on the Saturday, Major was seen in long conversation with Hurd, who now supported the plan. He had a brief conversation with Kenneth Clarke, who also signalled support. Major saw various Cabinet ministers individually to tell them, including Michael Heseltine, but mentioned nothing at Cabinet itself.

After Major announced his resignation, John Redwood was in an agony of indecision. He had come to the brink of open revolt once before, over the EU Finance Bill, but had pulled back. This time he was determined not to let the moment pass.

On the following Monday, at 11am, Redwood went to the Commons to meet Michael Portillo and said: "Join me". Portillo declined. Redwood's programme was hastily put together, and his launch did not convey the impression of gravitas. The media reaction to Redwood's candidature was favourable, but in the end, among MPs only a hard core of the inflexible Eurosceptic. Right and a sprinkling of Heseltine backers voted for Redwood or abstained, while the loyalist right and centre-left MPs backed Major. Major won 218 votes, Redwood 89, and there were 20 abstentions.

Major himself was disappointed — he had hoped for 220 or more — but had no intention of resigning. He announced on the doorstep of

After an hour, he walked out, shattered by MPs' disrespect



John Major about to announce his resignation, with Lord McColl of Dulwich behind

No 10: "The message that I would give to every Conservative is that the time for division is over." Time alone would tell whether this last sentiment would hold.

● Extracted from *Major: A Political Life* by Anthony Seldon, to be published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson on October 27, price £25. *Times* readers can buy the book for just £21 by calling *The Times* bookshop on 0990 134459

CABINET CRITICS

ALTHOUGH John Major was Margaret Thatcher's preferred choice to succeed her, not all who worked with him on the way to the top shared her early high opinion.

His first job in the Cabinet was as Chief Secretary to the Treasury. Although the most junior Cabinet job, it demanded a knowledge of economics and finance considerably beyond anything he possessed. Nigel Lawson later said: "He was in a very shaky emotional condition. He would come and see me at No 11, ashen-faced, to unburden himself of his worries and seek my advice."

Major's appointment as Foreign Secretary, aged 46, after two years at the Treasury, propelled him from the most junior office in the Cabinet to one of the three most senior. "Incredible, bizarre, astounding," was how the appointment struck Geoffrey Howe. "I can't do this job as it should be done," Major lamented to Douglas Hurd.

After 94 days as Foreign Secretary, Major returned to the Treasury as Chancellor. Some officials felt that not just intellectual bite, but also some coherence was lost in the transition from Lawson. Major took criticism personally and was not always comfortable with people disagreeing with him.

After a year as Chancellor, Major succeeded Thatcher as Prime Minister. Judith Chaplin, John Major's political secretary, died in 1993 and her diary gives a penetrating insight into the private Major.

Chaplin wrote on his election: "Every decision is taken on how it affects and promotes him. That does not mean he is not a very nice man, but he is ruthless."

Five months into office, she grew exasperated:

"So much of our time is wasted looking at what all types of media say. He is obsessed by his image. It depresses everyone who works for him and wastes time."

Dangerous idea + Mixed message + Cold War confusion

Faulty feminism

BEING A cynic, I always take it for granted that the more imbecile tenets of contemporary wisdom are themselves cynical ploys. When I hear women declare that wearing cut-off tops and bottom-raising shorts is a courageous act of girl-power I presume — as who wouldn't? — that they are having us on.

True, men seem not to feel too threatened by female action that consists of decorative semi-nudity; but women are still keen to declare that strutting their stuff as provocatively as possible is a sign of their ideologically sound bona fides. Kate Millett must look on and weep.

Unfortunately, it appears that people really are that stupid. They are not trying to make fools of the rest of us; they are simply idiots. Well, perhaps it isn't just stupidity. The contemporary culture of narcissism means that for most people, the only gaze that exists is a self-regarding one.

No doubt that explains why a new French advertisement for Wonderbra is not going to get on to billboards here. The French ads show a woman revealing her bra because, in one instance, her top has shrunk in the wash, in another, because a dog has got a thread from her jumper in his teeth and unravelled it, and in yet another because some piece of building-site machinery has yanked off her jacket.

What all three ads have in common is a depiction of some woman revealing her underwear because of an unforeseen circumstance: on *ne sait jamais*... is the cloy tag-line. All this has caused some-

thing of a stink over here, no matter that we have suffered ad campaign after campaign for bras with women revealing as much cleavage as they (or we, or you) want, without women claiming to be offended, degraded or upset. The difference? In these French ads the woman is not "in control". What is being appealed to is not, then, the usual onanistic narcissism but, rather, straightforward voyeurism. But the idea (and it seems

ever that really can mean in this context — and because it purports to show some equally notional feisty post-feminist broad. It's worse than falling for some cringe-making adolescent's fantasy pick-up line — "your plunge uplift bra makes you look so intelligent, so in charge of yourself" — worse because women are coming up with this guff themselves.

None of this really matters: why should we anyway be shocked if an advertise-

Nigella Lawson



to have taken almost universal hold) that if you infuse an image with enough smirkingly ironic, Post-Modern knowingness you can somehow control how that image is perceived, is ludicrous — and dangerous.

THE FUNNY thing is, though, that that is exactly where the French Wonderbra ad has gone wrong: its retro-narcissism has afforded it little protection. Though you could argue that it is actually funnier and a lot more truly knowing than the muzzle-brained British campaigns.

Actually, though, I don't claim to be able to make much of a defence of the French ads, or even want to, but I cannot bear the lazy thinking and self-delusion that makes women think the Eva Herzigova "Hello Boys" ad is all right just because of some dim notion of being in control — what-

ment for underwear relies heavily on the concept of sexiness? But it does alarm me that young girls who believe what they're told about empowerment and tough attitudes really do think they can go out wearing lacy bras and not much else without so much as eliciting a wolf-whistle.

Women old enough to know better who habitually get offended when they express their don't-mess-with-me attitude by wearing stilettos and miniskirts and get misconstrued, get no sympathy from me. And don't write telling me I'm saying women who wear short skirts deserve to be raped. Of course I'm not.

Perhaps, though, it is just British Puritanism that makes us happier with the notion of the semi-porno-graphic image that doesn't attract desire, even to the degree of insisting that such a thing exists.

Fame is the drug

"MODEL TAKES drugs" seems to be one of the weaker stories to have taken hold recently. "Model doesn't take drugs" might have been worth reporting. Never mind all the baloney about good skin and healthy attitudes; as a successful model you need to be thin and impervious to boredom. Drugs deal satisfactorily on both counts.

What you also need is to be seen to be successful. And the charges of drug-sozzlement have helped Amy Wesson with this, too. Before the case, no one outside the industry had ever heard of her. But, I notice, shock-horror notwithstanding, every news-

paper has used pictures of the beautiful Amy — complete with the not-automatic honour of a name-check — to illustrate stories about London Fashion Week.

Do we detect a mixed message here?

Tony bear

IF 20 YEARS ago, we were told that a future Labour Prime Minister would go to Russia and be bear-hugged by the President, we would have inferred one thing. The ever-increasing *Helio*-isation of the political world is frankly a little disconcerting: how much more wrong could we have been? And on about every count.

THE TIMES

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Royal revelations for adults only

Choreographer David Bintley tells **Allen Robertson** the grisly truths behind *Edward II*, his new staging for Birmingham Royal Ballet

Today's ballet-going public is hungry for full-length spectacle. But with so few choreographic storytellers capable of satisfying that hunger, companies are constantly being forced to fall back on the half-dozen gold-plated titles from the late 19th century. Not so Birmingham Royal Ballet.

"We will always have the classics around," says David Bintley, the company's artistic director. "We need them to keep remembering where we came from, but that doesn't mean we should be trying to copy them. Anyway, you can't write better ballet music or finer divertissement choreography than those Tchaikovsky ballets. They were a kind of apotheosis, and then it was finished. It took nearly 50 years before Prokofiev came along with *Romeo and Juliet* and the fashion for full-length ballets got under way again."

Bintley knows whereof he speaks. At 40, he has already created as many full-length ballets as Kenneth MacMillan did during his entire career. But just because Bintley has a knack for staging danced stories, it does not follow that he is content with a predictable tried-and-true formula. "I'm not trying to be 'fashionable'. What I am trying to do is tell complex narratives through the body, to make the movement and the actual narrative do the work rather than relying on scenery and other stuff. I think that's evident in *Edward II*."

Tomorrow night's performance of *Edward II* is a

British premiere. Bintley created it in 1995 for the Stuttgart Ballet. He had suggested his dance treatment of Christopher Marlowe's tragedy to Stuttgart with some trepidation. In the event, it proved a huge success, even though the story was unfamiliar to German audiences.

The ballet tells of the married yet openly homosexual

'There's nothing in this that didn't happen in history'

14th-century English monarch who paid for his peccadilloes with his life when Isabella, his queen, joined forces with his barons to spearhead a rebellion which culminated in Edward's assassination. Billed in the advertisements as "Bintley's bloody ballet", it carries a warning that it is not suitable for children. This is an adult approach to storytelling that corrodes the sugar-coated gentility of classical ballet with a gutsy, panoramic sweep of guilt and betrayal. "It is filled with many real feelings," says Wolfgang Stolwitzer, who dances Edward. "Of course it has some brutal moments, but that's life."

A gory parable for corruption in any age, *Edward II* charts the decline and fall of a flawed autocrat. But Bintley does not serve up simplistic, black and white choices. Ironically, the powers which bring Edward tumbling are as vile and even more self-serving than he is.

Bintley, like MacMillan before him, believes ballet to be capable of engaging grown-up minds and grappling with serious themes. "I'm not pulling any punches," he says. "Besides, you don't need to sensationalise an already sensational story. There's nothing in this ballet that didn't happen in history."

Bintley commissioned the English composer John McCabe, a writer whose career was in something of an eclipse. "In fact," Bintley says, "when someone first told me that John might like to work with me, I said, 'But he's dead, isn't he?' It's a scandal of British music that I hadn't heard a

word about him in ten years. I had a lot of his early stuff, *Chagall Windows* and things like that, which were recorded when he was young and famous. But then they completely forgot about him."

"He's a delightful person, very quiet, gentle, unassuming. His music is anything but. It's taut, tight and dangerous. He writes terrific brass music and his rhythms are fantastic. We're just about to start work on a new piece and, no, beyond the fact that it's for the year 2000, I'm not saying anything. It will be my next and possibly my last big, full-evening ballet. After that I'll be wiped out for a few years."

With two or three years of

one's life invested in a full-length work, it is doubly depressing when something doesn't come right. Even though he is not one to dwell on the past, Bintley's voice takes on an edge when he talks about *Cyrano*, his 1991 flop for Covent Garden.

He admits to being "devastated" by the failure. "You've spent £350,000 and it's all gone for nothing and it's all your fault," he says. "Still, it seems to me that with an outlay like that it wasn't right to just ditch it. Ninette de Valois always said that the work doesn't finish on opening night. Once I saw it in front of an audience I knew what was wrong. I could have turned it round."

He is, he says, "the sort of person who is happy to go on and do something else. But it was a shame. It made me want to run away and hide for six months and pretend that I didn't do it — which is essentially what I did."

Bintley has choreographed a further three full-evening works since *Cyrano*. There has also been a clutch of one-act ballets and he has recently signed a second three-year contract with BRB. "I'm happy in every respect so, of course, I accepted a second three years."

"Besides," he adds, "it takes you longer than just one three-year term to completely ruin everything."

Edward II opens tomorrow night at the Birmingham Hippodrome (0121-422 7483)



Head in hands: Edward (Wolfgang Stolwitzer) in David Bintley's saga of gay love and gore

Bawdy nuns on the run

One or two disapproving voices greeted Jérôme Savary's ribald staging of Rossini's final comedy when it opened at Glyndebourne in midsummer. But Savary, France's most experienced farcicalist, knows just how to please his public and *Ory* turned into the popular success of the season. It was a natural to open the autumn programme for Glyndebourne's touring arm.

Under Christopher Colwell's new direction, one or two of the more raucous edges have been softened. He treads the path of indelicacy more delicately as *Ory* tries to undermine the chaste life of the Countess Adèle in her French château. Barry Banks is now the Count, a born loser in the seduction stakes despite

OPERA

Le Comte Ory
Glyndebourne

a halo which lights up at crucial moments. As the stage darkens in Act I over Ezio Toffolutti's tawny landscape, more Italian than French out of deference to Rossini, there is a feeling that *Ory* may, too, be in his sunset years as a wandering Casanova. The role suits Banks's light, high-lying tenor very neatly and there is a piece of self-deprecation about the performance. "Le terrible Comte Ory?" Never. Just an old chancer prone to gaffes.

Anna Maria Panzarella as the haughty Countess may lack the class of her predecessor, Annick Massis. But she spins a pretty silvery thread of notes and is a soprano moving from strength to strength. The Act II duet, the nearest *Ory* gets to breaking down the defences of Castle Adèle, was a vocal delight.

Colwell ducks none of Savary's inventive bawdry in this second act. *Ory's* followers in their holy habits are the guests from hell as they drink Adèle's castle dry, pausing for the odd prayer when required. Only Whoopi Goldberg is missing among these nuns on the run, sturdily led by Christopher Maltman, a winner at this year's Cardiff Singer of the World jamboree.

Imelda Staunton's personable page isolier comes into "his" own during the final trio of mistaken identity, where Savary's three-in-a-bed solution leaps straight from the pages of the *News of the World* — or a saucy old French farce.

There is room for improvement from both the Governor and the Ragone. And Ivor Bolton could make his orchestra fizz more. But Rossini and lovers of farce should both be well pleased as *Ory* sets off on its autumn pilgrimage across the regions.

JOHN HIGGINS

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
SHI-NING LIU



and pas de trois in *Swan Lake*, the *Corsaire* pas de deux, and so on.

Worst moment: Getting seriously lost in his first summer here. "I was supposed to take the train to a town to stay with a family to improve my English." Instead he arrived at midnight in a similar-sounding town hundreds of miles away. Fortunately kind passers-by took pity on him and drove him through the night to the right destination.

How does he find life in the Royal Ballet? "In Liaoning getting roles was easy, but here the standard is a lot tougher. So I have had to start from the bottom and work up gradually. I think

that is better. I feel that is how you grow."

His style? All the jump roles — the Bronze Idol in *La Bayadère*, the mandolin dance in *Romeo and Juliet*.

In the next days you can catch him in the *Giselle* pas de six and the Gold variation and Bluebird pas de deux in *The Sleeping Beauty*. He needs to tidy up the wildness of his finishes, but he has a good line and smooth sinuous flow, thanks to the Russian basis of his original training — or to his Chinese astrological sign (he was born in the Year of the Tiger).

The future: "Of course I don't want to be just jumping around all my life; of course I would like to do more dramatic roles. But then every dancer wants that. It depends on what the Royal Ballet decides." In the meantime he is happy to work and learn and to tour abroad with the company — America, Turkey, Japan. The world has suddenly become a small and familiar place.

NADINE MEISNER

A spark of greatness

The only way, the poet Michael Symmons Roberts tells us, "to tell an echo from a spark is to look in utter darkness... and find a way of crying tears [which] raise a spark as they trickle down". Jean Rigby sang these words on Sunday in the work which has given the title to the current festival of the music of James MacMillan.

The world premiere of MacMillan's *Raising Sparks* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall revealed this 45-minute song-cycle for mezzo-soprano and instrumental ensemble as worthy to stand beside the orchestral song-cycles of Mussorgsky and Britten.

The "sparks" arise from Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl, an 18th-century Hasidic teacher. Roberts fashions his six songs from the two central concepts of his teaching: that of *Zimzum*, the holding back of God's power to make space for something other than himself; and *Shevira*, the smashing of the clay vessels intended to capture the light of God's creator.

Typically, MacMillan's music goes beyond mere illustration or dramatisation. Illustrative detail is there, sure enough, the air crackles with the plucking of strings at the words "dry rain, static in my hair", and a florid crescendo of vocal and instrumental virtuosity greets the aurora borealis. But so too is MacMillan's musical bonding with the word that the process seems more one of sacramental revelation than of mere metaphor.

From the first inchoate humming of non-verbal life through to the final hushed hint of a second coming in three repeating-harp notes, Jean Rigby and the Nash Ensemble gave a clear and passionate performance under

LONDON CONCERTS

the baton of Martyn Brabbins.

An hour later in the Festival Hall, the Philharmonia and Peter Donohoe, conducted by Vasily Shtaisky, gave an equally committed performance of MacMillan's 1990 piano concerto, *The Berserker*. This was a sudden jolt from the life-giving energy of the creation to the misdirected energy of the creature: the images of Viking warriors and Glasgow Celtic supporters fused in MacMillan's imagination to inspire an artful toccata of terror.

In the BBC Symphony Orchestra's tripartite concert, which ended with Andrew Davis conducting Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, some little-performed music by his two pupils, Berg and Webern, epitomised the graphic differences between these *Three of a Kind*.

Here was Webern, the century's first minimalist, revealing his scholarly love of Renaissance polyphony, while Berg was heard at his most volatile.

It was Berg's Chamber Concerto for piano, violin and 13 wind instruments which con-

verted Pierre Boulez to his music. Three movements played out a testing game of cryptic numerical and cypher-gibberish; although, in this performance, with Pierre-Laurent Aimard, piano, and Augustin Dumay, violin, as the urbane yet passionate soloists, it was very much the spirit of the divertimento which was recreated in Berg's exuberant celebration of Schoenberg's 50th birthday.

After a welcome interval, the ear and spirit was ready for Webern: his Op 29, 30 and 31, written in 1939, 1940 and 1941 and consisting of two cantatas, flanking the *Variations for Orchestra*. Both cantatas, for choir (BBC Singers, conducted by Simon Joly), soloists (Sarah Leonard, soprano and Stephen Varcoe, baritone) and orchestra, set the ecstatically spiritual verse of Hildegard of Bingen. Leonard's light, springing inflection of Webern's minutely poised word-setting created a spinning free-fall, while her assured declamation in the final affirmation of love at the end of the second cantata was an eloquent foil for the recurring rays of four-part choral harmony which catch, and contain Webern's dancing notes of instrumental life.

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TEN OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Richard Cork's daily guide to the
Hayward Gallery's still lifes

■ HENRI MATISSE: *Goldfish and Palette*, 1914.

SUSPENDED in a bowl of snowy water, the glowing goldfish could hardly look more serene. Yellow fruit nestles beside the glass, and plant leaves curve over its sides. But Matisse's interior is not as reassuring as it may initially appear. Space has been flattened and made taut, so that the table supporting the bowl looks strangely fragile. The sky beyond the balcony seems impenetrable, and the twisted ironwork scrolls begin to look oppressive.

Matisse adds to the tension by making many of his defining contours skeletal, and scratching thin lines in the wet paint with the end of his brush. The preponderance of black has a funeral air, suggesting that Matisse's mood was affected by events outside his window. The First World War broke out in 1914, and most of the artist's work remained sombre until the Armistice arrived in 1918.

□ *Objects of Desire*, sponsored by BMW in association with The Times, opens at the Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-960 4242) tomorrow

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Matt Wolf talks to actor Gary Oldman about *Nil by Mouth*, his debut as a film director

To hear Gary Oldman describe it, his former self is the one that made his newly acclaimed directorial debut, *Nil by Mouth*, which he also wrote. It is to say, the Gary Oldman who is just before *Sid and Nancy* made in a star and he embarked upon an acting career that this summer has included two money-spinning blockbusters, *The Fifth Element* and *Air Force One*.

After all, as a young performer, he is out of the Rose Bruford drama school, Oldman turned down a part in the Anthony Hopkins-Mel Gibson *In The Bounty* in order to appear in *Wartaling Mr Sloane* on stage. My agent was completely beside himself," recalls Oldman, who will be 37 next year. "I said, 'yeah, well I'll be a sun tan and a fat out of it, but it's not Joe Orton, is it?' I was joking, and in that sense, it's as if I was making a movie: 'I'm going to do it, or I don't do it'."

Oldman's integrity has paid off. One of the first films to be screened in competition in Cannes last May, *Nil by Mouth* is a gritty, semi-autobiographical account of the South London mean streets on which he grew up. It suggests the actor as a gritty, realist director in the Ken Loach-like *Leigh School*. The film went on to win the best actress prize for actress Rachel Griffiths, playing the abused wife Ray Winstone. Their family entangled in a despairing working-class cycle of drink, drugs and violence, Oldman dares to suggest, isn't entirely without hope. "I wanted to come out of the gate as director with something I knew out," says Oldman, who has long marked that the estates where he grew up bred two career possibilities, licentious or thief. Oldman opted for the former, acting, only to find that he didn't get out of his head the script as he wrote *Nil by Mouth*, he script had been bouncing



Gary Oldman (left) directing Ray Winstone in *Nil by Mouth*, his semi-autobiographical account of drink, drugs and violence in South London

around in my head for five to six years, but I would sacrifice the writing of it to make movies because that's my bread and butter. But at the end of the day, I had to say, 'I'm doing it. I'm taking a year off. It didn't make everyone happy.'"

When filming began in November 1995 Oldman found himself revisiting old haunts long since forsaken for Los Angeles and New York. "I've got the real pub, the real club, all real locations. The movie is how I remembered growing up, almost like the world was in black and white — grey concrete, grey pavement, grey houses, grey sky. I was absolutely adamant that I would not have

sunshine in the movie; we had weather cover for sunny days."

At Cannes, Oldman found himself at the centre of a short-lived tabloid lather — not, this time, based on his tearaway behaviour (his drinking days are behind him), but on the assumption that the film's unsparring violence came directly from Oldman's own life. "I obviously hadn't made myself clear at the time," he says, referring to one notably upsetting scene between Winstone and Burke. "Ray's character is an amalgamation of a lot of different people, not just my father, my dad" — a welder, who left Oldman and his two older sisters

when the boy was seven — "was not violent." If Oldman is anyone in the film, he points to the smallish part of an observant young girl. "Like her, I was quite shy and withdrawn."

And if the film has won particular praise for its actors, who include Charlie Creed-Miles and Edna Doré, Oldman feels that it is as it should be. "I love actors. I mean, I've been in the club for quite a few years now. There's a danger you can be a little bit indulgent because if you love acting, you know what an actor will say: 'Hey, where's my moment? Where did my scene go?'"

For his part, Oldman talks vaguely of giving up acting and freely admits:

"I don't always like the movies I'm in." But he's astute enough to realise that "there are people who earn money and make a living out of the Gary Oldman industry, even if I don't have an entourage, a panny, cook, therapist, and all that." *Air Force One*, for instance, allowed Oldman to stump up a sizeable part of the \$4.5 million budget for *Nil by Mouth* himself.

"I committed the ultimate sin," Oldman says. "I went to America and became successful." So does *Nil by Mouth* mark a homecoming? "I've been very honoured by the reaction to it. The film makes me very proud."

● *Nil by Mouth* is released on Friday

THEATRE: Complex French drama at the Orange Tree, Richmond, and a stunning feast of visual fun in Battersea

Office bed and board games

JM WALTERS has now rectified the British premieres four Michel Vinaver plays, one of which have been juries of the variously bizarre haviour of people who work offices. In my review of the one that worked best, *The Lie at the End of the Line*, I mentioned Overboard, the play that brought him his first success, adding that when reformed in full it lasts for eight hours.

Now here it is with five years removed, you may be relieved to hear, but still a complex piece of writing, complicated to stage too, with cast of 20 playing 40 characters, and scenes set in boardrooms, banks, bedrooms, tops and a jazz club in the Montparnasse. I wish I had

been able to appreciate more of it than I did. The family firm of Ravoire et Dehaze makes lavatory rolls and their sales are being overtaken by a US International. Who shall be flung overboard and what new ideas brought in to revitalise the company? What excites or troubles the directors and employees during their time off? And how do the concerns of work and leisure mix?

One of the company managers is trying to write a play about the commercial battles, in which he includes scenes from his youth attending lectures about Norse gods, and a trio of dancers who seem to rebel against his intentions. Vinaver neither favours the straightforward nor believes it

can tell anything like a full story. Interpenetration is his game. Boardroom struggles occur across a table which is also the bed for a pair of lovers, as well as a shop counter where a rep is failing to interest a client in a new line of bumph.

Ingenious though much of this is, I suspect the play has not been fully cut, so that the jazz pianist (Tim Welton), an Auschwitz survivor, keeps leading the play into an area we are not taken to. But sprightly acting from a grand set of actors, including Helen Ryan, David Gooderson, Michael Rooke, and Timothy Watson playing the Young Turk with the killer smile.

JEREMY KINGSTON

THE British Festival of Visual Theatre opens at the BAC (Battersea Arts Centre, SW11) with two "works in progress" that are hitherto hidden their way spectacularly to as yet unknown destinations. Whether they arrive seems far less interesting than the journey — a process which, by and large, is the point of this festival.

On a rope, some 20ft above the marble staircase of the BAC foyer, Lindsey Butcher and Jeremy Robbins tie themselves in erotic knots for the opening gambit of their stunning act *Tango and Crash*. After this vertical dance to an eclectic soundtrack we shift to Studio 2, where the frisson of romance is created by a bald man who would have put Brecht out of business.

"You nearly put my head through the glass roof," deadpans Butcher, tipping off her wig. Robbins then leads her

Gruff and tumble

into a series of exquisite tumbling acts and breathless dance pieces broken only by surreal green-room observation — "Anyone interesting tonight?" Like something out of *Spinal Tap* their fractious, banal relationship starts to intrude comically on their act. "I'm thinking of going solo," says Butcher, pulling on a pair of fishnet tights behind a makeshift screen. "Is that OK then?" she asks later as she reclines, horizontally, on one arm above Robbins' head. The strange fascination of *Tango*

and *Crash* is how these emotionally dyslexic performers dream up such brutal, passionate and wonderfully eloquent performances.

Emily Wolf, theatre's most enduring ingenue and the co-star of Nick Willing's recent film *Photographing Fairies*, surrounds herself with a forest of lamps in her cleverly sized offering, *Going Goleg*. It is an internal piece that starts with a nightmare and slides almost accidentally into a haphazard day where a visit to a cinema with her boyfriend gets inextricably snarled up with her mother's anguish and Woolf's fear of the dark. Stream of consciousness and a lot of lamps might seem suspicious credentials for a Visual Festival. But I can't see anyone getting out their rolling pins to complain.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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Alan Coren



■ When The People's War breaks out, George, you must soldier on without me

I turn my head a few degrees leftwards from the screen on which I have just written the words describing what I am now doing, my eyes arrive at a shelf bearing a few framed photographs of my family at war. Not, let me quickly type, at war with one another: these are not candid snaps of domestic rows, my relatives are not at one another's throats, there is no cockery flying about.

What they are at war with is Germany. I can't, of course, see this in the photographs, my family is not shooting anyone, they are not dropping bombs, nobody is wiping a bayonet: what they are doing is taking a break from the war to smile at the camera. They are all in uniform: here is my father, no older than my son, leaning against a hut at RAF Stradishall; here is a studio group of his brothers Les (Eighth Army) and Gus (Royal Ulster Rifles), with his sisters Ann (ATS) and Sadie (Land Army); and here, next to them, is my mother's brother Sid (Middlesex Regiment), with a big bandage around the top of his head and a big grin across the bottom of it, the former a testament to his recently having been at Dunkirk, the latter a testament to his even more recently having got back from it. So, can you guess what I am wondering, half a century on? I am wondering how my Auntie Ann would have fared in a rear turret over the Ruhr, and how my Auntie Sadie would have looked with shrapnel in her forehead.

I am wondering this because George Robertson has invited me, to the Ministry of Defence, as you, too, will have read in Monday's *Times*, is about to ask the British public whether it wants women to fight in the front line, and as a member of that public I cannot give the Defence Secretary a straight answer until I am able to come to terms with the notion of my aunts, instead of decoding trucks or planting runner beans, parachuting into Arnhem, firing their Sten guns from the hip.

And since George is unlikely ever to get a straight answer from me on this, let me instead put him a straight question: is this unprecedented soliciting of the public's tactical opinion to be taken as a pointer to the future course of Britain's military policy? Am I, that is, to assume that new Labour's zest for referendum is soon to embrace all aspects of the defence of the realm? Because if it is as short a step as it seems from choosing the sort of Armed Forces we want to choosing what we should want them to do when we've got them, then I have a considerable amount of bawling-up to do.

We all have: we shall have to fill our bookshelves with *Jane's Fighting This and That*, we shall have to obtain highly detailed maps of every country in the world, and highly detailed charts of every sea, we shall have to clear out our lofts to make room for regiments of toy soldiers — of both sexes — and model tanks and guns and ships and missiles and all the deployable rest; we shall, in short, have to become tactical and strategic experts, because we are not talking here about such trifles as single currencies or Welsh assemblies or foxhunting, we are talking about far more fraught and complex referendum decisions than those, and ones to be taken, moreover, far more supinely — as soon as, say, the newflash breaks into *EastEnders* to inform us that the *SS Belgrano* Nuevo has just been sighted off Clacton, please ring 0345 2222 if you want to sink it, 0345 3333 if you want to wave to it, all calls charged at standard rate, or that Saddam Hussein has landed at Inverness and is marching on Prestonpans at the head of the Republican Guard, if you feel Britain should go nuclear on this one, please e-mail as soon as possible to: armageddon@btinternet.uk.

On reflection, George, I think not. You yourself must be a brave little soldier, and defend the realm without my input. Oh, I am happy enough with the concept of The People's Party, I am more than happy with its declared vision of The People's Country, I am even ready to follow it into The People's Century, but it is seeking my endorsement of The People's Army, it will seek in vain. Because I rather fancy that if you wish to keep the nation safe for democracy, then you have to recognise when to keep it safe from it.



Don't panic, Mr Hague

The Tories should stop pretending to be a Dad's Army — Blair's victory was a confidence trick played by our constitution.

Never was so much nonsense uttered about British politics as since the last election. Drivel pours from every mouth and pen. This week it concerns the fate of the Conservative Party. "Why can't it apologise?" scream the headlines. "Sort out this mess," "Finished for a generation... bankrupt, weak, leaderless." As for poor William Hague, Tory MPs used to take two years to rubbish the person they elect as their leader. They now take two months. Disloyalty has become a Tory habit of mind, a scratching fever brought on by the Tory press.

The May election is still misread. It was a huge confidence trick played on the electorate by the British constitution. The lowest turnout since the war, and a lukewarm vote for new Labour, was miraculously turned into a sensation. The cardinal fact was that (on MORI figures) some two and a half million Tories stayed at home, probably for no other reason than that they felt 18 years was enough.

The 1997 election would have been lost by any ruler, by Margaret Thatcher, Winston Churchill, the Duke of Wellington, Boudicca. The electorate was bored. It was finished with the Tories. A stay of execution had been granted in 1992, with a new leader and an untried Labour one. But 18 years was the limit. No other reason need be sought for defeat. The Government could have been the finest in history, the policies rock solid, the campaign the best. None of this mattered. Boredom was a sufficient condition. Nothing else was necessary.

Democracy speaks through elections. Its voice is expressed not in parliamentary seats but in poll shares. What is significant about May 1 was not that the Tory vote fell off the end of the calendar. What was remarkable was that Labour's showing was weak. The party had a new leader, new organisation, new branding and "18 years" all on its side. Yet still it could not persuade a majority to support it in the polling booths.

Labour scored a modest 13.5 million votes, or 43.2 per cent of those cast in the most apathetic of British general elections. This was fewer than John Major won in 1992, and only 1.3 points higher in poll share. Tony Blair's "sensation" was a weaker mandate than Labour secured on taking power in 1945 (47.8 per cent) and 1964 (44.1 per cent) and smaller than the Tories in 1970 (46.4 per cent)

and 1979 (43.9 per cent). To portray this as the most devastating result, variously since the last war, the advent of universal suffrage, or the Battle of Hastings (all of which have been written), is plain silly. It indicates the Westminster-centrism of British politics.

Labour attended the field of battle splendidly caparisoned. But it won the day not by weight of numbers but because its enemy was too weary to fight. The spoils that were duly paraded in Parliament gave a distorted picture of the battle. They reflected not the scale of popular victory but the vagaries of the constitution and the tactical genius of Labour's election team in targeting marginal seats.

A half-hearted public endorsement of new Labour was converted into an overwhelming Commons majority by mathematical eccentricity.

First-past-the-post may deliver ministers of the Crown a disciplined majority. But facts are facts. I shudder when pundits regularly refer to Labour's parliamentary strength as if it were the same thing as its popular support. This is to treat voters as mere adjuncts to democracy, as an idiot mob, allowed to give a crude thumbs up or thumb down and then be buried from sight. Only when carried up to Westminster, to be mediated, interpreted and sanitised by Parliament and the media, are the votes of the electorate rendered respectable.

I regard the long-term lesson of May as grimmer for Labour than for the Tories. In April 1992 about 14 million people voted. Tory, as they had done throughout the Thatcher years. That vote temporarily vaporised. Meanwhile everyone who had ever been inclined to vote Labour must have done so, young and old, firm or floating. Even then the party could muster only 43.2 per cent of a low turnout. It is hard to believe that Mr Blair can increase this vote from the pool of (largely Tory) abstainers next

time. Even if he keeps every one who voted for him, his poll share must shrink as and when turnout rises.

Labour is now enjoying a high approval rating in opinion polls. This reflects a remarkably polished and confident summer honeymoon. But new governments tend to be popular immediately after elections. They rarely hold that popularity. The Tories lost poll share throughout their 18 years. Mr Blair, in last week's speech, went out of his way to warn his party that the Tories were "sleeping not dead". He knows how vulnerable is his popular base and how meaningless the size of his Commons majority.

Honeymoons never last. Already darkening Mr Blair's horizon are struggles over public spending and Europe. He will require every ounce of the party discipline now so saluted both inside and outside the Commons. To adapt

Toistoly, all happy Commons majorities resemble one another, but each unhappy majority is unhappy in its own way. The bigger the majority, the bigger the potential for unhappiness. Mr Blair is right to be a Prime Minister in a hurry. He has another election to win and it will not be easy.

So is the real lesson of May as comforting for the Tories as it should be disconcerting for Labour? My short answer is, yes. If May was an "18-years" aberration, the party need only recover the form it showed in four previous elections to be in with a good chance of winning. With 18 years out of the way, that is not inconceivable. I see no reason why the 14 million Tories of 1992 should not be at least 13 million again in 2002. These are voters who stayed solid through the torments of Margaret Thatcher's spending cuts and Euro-splits, who were loyal equally in 1983, 1987 and 1992. Even in May most of the defectors abstained or voted Liberal Democrat rather than Labour. These

Simon Jenkins

group of excitable women being smuggled in after hours.

"It's not that sort of place," the landlord thundered. "It was entirely innocent," protests a One Nation type. "This is the last thing we are usually accused of." I should point out that Mr Clarke spent the night at his digs, with only his delightful wife, Gillian, for entertainment.

● I AM delighted to hear that the charming Sandy Henney, aide to the Prince of Wales, has taken to wearing a silver ankle bracelet — fashioned from paperclips by colleagues. This is in defiance of my report that she had a weakness for gold bracelets. "I'm a Cockney and proud," she says. "I may be sacked tomorrow but I plan to stay." I'm glad.

● RALLIES and Roses is the old Labour title of a photo exhibition by Fred Jarvis, old union shaker. He won't rank subjects: "They'll all hang together. Scargill, Blair, I've shot 'em all." The PM will not turn up for beer and cheese straws; he thinks the event is more one for John Prescott.

Fog warning

The audience at the Labatt's Apollo on Monday must have thought it was witnessing a rendi-

Versed in heart and mind

It's good to muse, insists Rachel Campbell-Johnston

Tomorrow is National Poetry Day. Let the Muses muster. If not, they will probably be marshalled into order anyway. William Sieghart, founder of our annual rhyme-fest, is assembling his armies. His plan is to storm our streets with cultural commandos. "Most people still think of poetry as a dusty back-of-the-bookshop, slim-volume minority sport," Mr Sieghart wrote in the last edition of *Prospect*. Not any more, it seems. Poetry should be everywhere.

It already is — in a subliminal sort of way. Poetry is integral to the modern environment: from the lyrics of pop songs to the rappers' rhythms, from greetings-card ditties to advertising jingles. But the aim of National Poetry Day is to raise awareness and, hopefully, to introduce people to some more deserving verse.

Not since William Wordsworth's "spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling" have passions about poetry run so high — or so the publicity would have us believe. As Mr Sieghart lets his crusaders loose on our society, we will have spondee in supermarkets and anapaests in pubs, stanzas in train stations and quatrains in classrooms. And while commuters, no doubt, curse their traffic jams in couplets and bond-dealers bargain in blank verse, our national broadcasting stations will mark the cultural coup with poetry played between programmes like martial music.

Much of the population will be indifferent to this: just as most of us are indifferent to National Prime Day or National Taxi Driver's Day. Poetry has always been the preoccupation of a minority. It is largely a private pastime. Although a recent survey suggests that more than half the population have written a poem in adulthood, the results are reserved for the writer's eyes only. That is probably just as well.

Writing poetry has a certain therapeutic value. It can help people to confront and express their most solemn ideas and heartfelt passions — and a great deal more cheaply than a session with a shrink. But most will acknowledge their attempts do little more than take them from bad to worse. True poetry, as T. S. Eliot warned us, is not simply "a turning loose of emotion".

This is not to say that writing poetry should be discouraged. It is an exercise in elegance and precision of expression. "The best words in the best order." Poetic composition is a highly skilled and technical craft. But it is precisely because of this that dabblers are best advised to keep their efforts well closeted. After all, if you have ever made the acquaintance of an amateur poetaster, you will probably know that other people's poems are like other people's dreams: almost always tedious and often embarrassing.

The enjoyment of poetry does not depend on producing it. This year National Poetry Day focuses on encouraging the consumer. Its theme, "By Heart", is designed to encourage individuals to commit a poem to memory. To do this is to arm oneself with one of our richest cultural resources.

Memorising and reciting poetry is at least as old as Homer. It was integral to the ancient oral traditions of our culture. But learning verse by heart has faded out of educational fashion in the postwar years — along with the ink monitors and miniature milk bottles. Instead we rely on computer databases. Why bother to learn a poem by rote when, at the click of a few keys, you can access every work in the canon on screen? The brain has been replaced by the electronic retrieval system.

Yesterday Tony Blair enlisted the support of Bill Gates, the chairman of Microsoft, for a £100 million scheme designed to link every school in Britain up to the Internet. This National Grid for Learning initiative will disseminate educational material all over the country. But we should be wary of assuming that it will automatically improve the standards in our schools. The spread of information technology could present a new threat to our thinking.

Information is not the same as wisdom. Data does not become knowledge until it has been downloaded into the brain, until facts and figures have been processed and transformed by the human mind, and before the human mind has, in its turn, been moulded and changed by that which it has absorbed.

A computer knows nothing; it merely stores information. It is the memory which enables us to use knowledge. Though by the year 2002 — if all runs according to Blair's plan — any schoolchild will be able to summon on to screen any poem from the English literary canon, this will be of less educational value than the memorising of a handful of these works.

Our personalities are shaped by what we know. Surely then, it is sensible to include somewhere in the repertoire of our knowledge, a few of the deepest and most eloquently expressed thoughts in the English language. A poem learnt is a poem retained for future use, perhaps for a lifetime. Its rhythms and cadences remain in the mind, informing and enriching everyday language. Its sentiments linger to provide solace or support. Its philosophical framework provides comment or criticism on the world as it changes.

A poem echoes in the whispering gallery of the imagination. It infuses and feeds our inner sanctum. National Poetry Day may play itself out in the public arena, but any lasting effects will take place in the quiet solitude of this most private of realms.

Glover's off

HE has become one of the most vilified men in Britain. And this could be his chance to bite back. Mohamed Al Fayed, the Harrods owner, is to be the subject of a biography by Stephen Glover, the acerbic *Spectator* columnist and former newspaper editor. With his agent, Gillon Aitken, Glover has been plotting the book for several months. "I met Mr Al Fayed ten years ago and thought he was both comic and coarse," says Glover, probably not advancing his campaign to win co-operation for the book. "I had the idea ages ago and Gillon's very keen. I haven't spoken to Mr Al Fayed yet, but I'm hoping that he'll give interviews and let me do the authorised version."

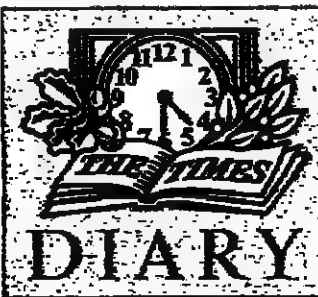
Al Fayed does not enjoy media attention. After a brief study last year, *Vanity Fair* became the subject of a substantial libel action. "Mr Al Fayed knows nothing about this," says his pugnacious spokesman, Michael Cole, who has spent much of the last few months cluttering the letters columns of our national press. "People can do as they wish, sadly we can't stop them. I only hope that it recognises the part Mr Al Fayed has played in bringing down the Conservative Government and cleaning up British politics." I am sure he will write of little else.

● THAT wild-haired advocate Anthony Scrivenor has received much attention in the *Dame Shirley Porter* case. Not all of it welcome. "I saw the courtroom sketches on the news," says his wife, one Ying Hui Tan. "He looked like Worzel Gummidge. I sent him straight to the barber."

Pot luck

ONE OF the most convenient gents lavatories between Buckingham Palace and Piccadilly is about to allow women onto the premises. The Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall — once considered a bastion of plus-four-wearing buffers — has asked its members to decide on whether females should be granted equal membership.

A postal vote is under way. Says the club: "We have recognised changes in society. And motoring is now as big a subject to women as it is to men." Fine, but can they drive?



● HURRAH, no more fish fingers. Visitors to the Worcester home of the Earl of Coventry have noted the improved fare. The reason? His cook, Mrs Elizabeth Callaghan, has been sent on a cooking course in Bath. "We got our heads together and thought, why not get some more good ideas?" says the much married earl. "It was not so much back to basics as allowing her ideas to evolve," he adds delicately.

Coarse course

THERE will be a sore eye in Tinseltown after the publication of Joan Collins's memoir, *Second Act* — Madonna's Ms Collins, who affects not to have heard of the chanteuse, sat next to her at dinner. She was underwhelmed.

"She proceeded to blow large pink bubblegum through dinner,"

she writes. "Madonna raised her plate and put her nose as close as possible to the contents. Then she stuck out her tongue to prod the food and sniffed again." They seem made for each other.

House rules

THOSE Lotharios in the Tory Reform Group (president: Ken Clarke) have fallen foul of Blackpool boarding house morality. The landlord of their guesthouse — like Clarke, they are slumming it — has ticked them off after spotting a



"I'm all for kids learning the three Rs — Ram, Rom and Algorithms"



Nicola Tranah: whitout

tion of *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes*. In fact, it was the opening of the Royal Ballet's *Giselle*, with Nicola Tranah playing Queen of the Wilis. Tranah made her entrance just as the dry-ice machine went solo. As the stage filled with smoke, and some more, Tranah's ptiés turned to blind-fumbles. "She stumbled and went for six," says one. The curtain came down to guffaws — while the smoke machine was given an early bath.

JASPER GERARD



TWO CHEERS

Tories should back Haig's most radical instincts

The Conservative Party has rarely had much enthusiasm for democracy. It has historically operated on the basis that the Man in Westminster knows best. The ballot that affirmed William Hague's leadership and endorsed the broad principles of party reform represented the first participatory exercise of its kind. In that context — and allowing for the incoherent manner in which local associations maintain their records — both the turnout and the proportion of the ballot that backed Mr Hague should be considered satisfactory. He has a mandate for change and should be willing to use it.

The "green paper" published yesterday has been deliberately designed as a consultation exercise. At this stage the superstructure is more important than the detail. Many aspects of the proposed new constitution will command widespread support. The notion of a single party structure is sound. The creation of one central national membership list is decades overdue. The establishment of an ethics and integrity committee should allow the party to deal with accusations of personal impropriety faster. The blueprint acknowledges the chronic failure of the Tories to promote female talent. By Conservative standards it is a radical document.

It is not, though, radical enough. In a number of respects it offers only two cheers for democracy. The draft manifesto and certain policy questions would be placed before the party in the country. However, the new national membership board will have, at most, only half of its representatives drawn from outside the present power elite. Even these figures will emerge from a national convention dominated by constituency chairmen. The membership has been promised merely a "substantial proportion" of an electoral college that would select the leader. Members of Parliament would continue to dominate this crucial contest. Conservative activists have the opportu-

nity this afternoon to demand additional innovation. Mr Hague suggested that the delegates should speak their minds and be as radical as they liked. His invitation implies that he favoured further reform but has been constrained by entrenched interests. Neither the 1922 Committee nor the National Union Executive Committee has demonstrated enthusiasm for the politics of inclusion. The green paper shows that they have succeeded in restricting the expansion of internal democracy. The conference can provide Mr Hague with the ammunition to deal with this obstruction.

Where the consultative document smacks of compromise, Conservatives should insert clarity. The national membership board must be populated by people directly elected by the entire party. Without that status it will lack real standing. The cumbersome electoral college arrangements currently outlined would risk different categories of the party producing alternative results. Members of Parliament should certainly narrow the number of prospective candidates down to an acceptable number. After that "one member, one vote" alone should shape the outcome. Any other formula will lack legitimacy. Tories should not adopt a semi-detached form of democracy.

They should also not delude themselves that internal reform — of whatever quality — will in itself revive their fortunes. Numerous conference speakers yesterday appeared to believe that all aspects of public policy in the last Parliament had been an unqualified success. According to this version of history, the Tories lost office solely because of division at Westminster and inadequate organisation at the local level. The Conservatives need to approach their new constitution with the maximum degree of radicalism. Democracy should be their consistent watchword. However, Mr Hague will surely require an equally rigorous approach when he conducts his promised policy review.

WIRED FOR POUNDS

Gates needs Blair as much as Blair needs Gates

After all the build-up, yesterday's meeting between Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft, and the Prime Minister was as exciting as waiting for a Website to download from the Net. Mr Gates offered enthusiasm but no money or equipment to help the Government's project to wire all Britain's schools to the Internet by 2002. Tony Blair praised Mr Gates's support as a "tremendous boost" to his scheme. He might well, though, have hoped for more.

Updating the computers in British schools is a fine ambition. Already British children are among the most computer-literate in the world. But technology fast becomes obsolete and needs updating. To remain competitive, this country needs to invest in hardware, software and the training of teachers in information technology. While the Internet should not be treated as an educational panacea, it is still useful for schools to have access to it.

But the Government should recognise its bargaining power. Britain's 32,000 schools and several million schoolchildren are a huge market for any hardware or software provider. And schools are one of only two sectors of the economy — the other being graphic design — in which PCs using Microsoft software do not dominate. The Apple system is still popular in education, but Mr Gates would be delighted to be given the chance to monopolise this market as he does so many others. Once schoolchildren are trained on one standard, they are likely to want to stick to it for the rest of their lives. If Microsoft can catch them young, it will have a good chance of winning their custom

later. Mr Gates also has an interest in gaining entry to school Internet services. At the moment, the Web browser field is dominated by Netscape, but Microsoft has about 30 per cent of the market and rising. If it could capture the British educational sector, it would gain a substantial foothold in this country.

Mr Blair would be unwise to become too close to Mr Gates. Now that Windows software is close to being an industry standard, there is well-founded and widespread anxiety that Mr Gates has an unhealthy amount of control over the most widespread and important technology in the world.

Two years ago at his party conference, Mr Blair made this mistake with another near-monopoly, when he announced with triumph that BT had offered to cable all schools, hospitals and libraries to the Net. It soon emerged that BT's competitors, the cable companies, were not happy with the idea of BT's dominance being enhanced: they were keen to join in too.

In the computerisation of schools, Mr Blair is also in a strong bargaining position. There is no need for him to ingratiate himself with hardware and software providers: he can drive a tough deal with them. It is encouraging that he intends to open the market up to bidding, not to offer Microsoft sole rights. He may even find that providers, rather than being paid by the Government, are prepared to pay him for the privilege of catching Britain's schoolchildren while they are still impressionable in the ways of the Net.

OLD WARHORSE

This burial may record the first charge of the English cavalry

The origins of the English love affair with the horse have been turned up by a bulldozer at Lakenheath. The 1,500-year-old grave of a horse and rider buried together under the Suffolk airbase is unique. Such burials are quite common on the Eurasian steppes, where horsemanship was invented. From there the cavalry horde rode out to conquer the world, and horse and rider were not separated even in death. But only five such burials have been found before in East Anglia, one at the royal burial ground of Sutton Hoo. And they had been looted or were carelessly excavated in the 19th century, when vital material was lost. The Lakenheath burial seems to be intact. So the archaeologists should be able to reconstruct precisely the pattern and function of the horse's harness of about AD 550.

That would fill a blank chapter in the early history of British horsemanship. The Ancient Britons are celebrated in literature for their war chariots, but the Romans defeated them with the auxiliary cavalry they brought over with them from the mainland. Little enough is known about the equipment or harness of either. The Anglo-Saxons, however, had negligible cavalry. Only their kings or warlords were mounted, and the spectacle of a man on a horse would have been almost as awesome to them as the modest cavalry of Cortés and Pizarro was to the Aztecs and Incas.

There is a romantic theory that King Arthur's knights in armour echo a distant folk memory of the heavily armoured cavalry left behind by the Romans, which

terrified the horseless Anglo-Saxons. The legendary battle of Mons Badonicus, in which Arthur is said to have beaten the Saxons, was fought at about the time of this Suffolk burial. At Hastings Norman cavalry and archers with difficulty overcame the Anglo-Saxon footmen with their battle-axes. And the class antagonism between man on foot and man on horse began.

The Lakenheath horse was huge for its period, standing 16 hands. So scholars will have to rethink their accepted notion of a Saxon warlord riding into battle on a pony, dismounting to fight and remounting to ride away. Wood and felted wool, rivets and tacks have been found beside this old English horse. From them the archaeologists may now piece together a jigsaw to remake one of the earliest English saddles. Atilla is said to have brought the stirrup to Europe, but surely not in time to have turned up in this burial on Europe's offshore island. The girth-buckle, bridle straps and snaffle bit seem remarkably similar in size and function to the tack that English riders still use.

The sinuous gilt-bronze ornamentation on the harness is early evidence of the horse as pride and sport of kings. From the beginning the horse has conferred status on its rider as well as power and mobility. The bucket found beside the horse at Lakenheath seems to have contained food. That could be the earliest instance of the grand old English cavalry axiom: a good rider sees that his horse is fed and watered before he feeds and waters himself.

Hague's challenge to start recovery

From Mr Jason Hollands

Sir, I am surprised that Andrew Reid, Andrew Honnor, James Bethell and Simon Brocklebank-Fowler, the authors of the Centre for Policy Studies pamphlet on Young Conservatives (report, October 6), are able to claim that YC membership has "fallen to 3,000".

One of the greatest problems with our current system of branch-based membership is that no one knows just how many members we really do have.

What no one should dispute is that we need vastly more young members of the party. Our student organisation is a shadow of its former self and most constituencies no longer have a YC branch which a potential member could join even if they wanted to. That is why the YCs have been advocating a system of national membership for more than a year.

The general thrust of ideas proposed by the report — namely a merger of the YCs and Conservative Students — is in fact exactly what the YCs themselves proposed in discussions with the National Union months ago.

The party should not write off its lack of members as a social or cyclical trend. Our current structure has manifestly failed to work and that is why we in the current youth wing wholly support the need for a "fresh start".

Yours faithfully,
JASON HOLLANDS
(National Chairman of the Young Conservatives, 1996-97),
113a Alderney Street, SW1,
October 6.

From Mr Jerome Gardner

Sir, I read with incredulity the comment by William Hague in your interview (October 6): "At the moment they [the Labour Government] have the easy option of sticking to our spending plans for a couple of years."

Is Mr Hague totally unaware of the present turmoil amongst health trusts and authorities as a result of the Government's stubborn adherence to inadequate Tory spending limits? Does he not know that hospitals up and down the country are under threat of forced closure because of the continuation of the "plans" he refers to with such complacency?

This option may seem easy to Hague — though I doubt that Frank Dobson shares his view. It certainly doesn't look that way to those like myself who live in isolated rural areas and are in danger of losing vital local services.

Yours faithfully,
JEROME GARDNER,
Northcombe,
Cherry Bridge,
Barbours, Lynton, Devon,
October 7.

From Mr Mark Hamer

Sir, William Hague deserved praise for coming to Fleetwood's fish dock, not ridicule (report, October 7).

Once the greatest fishing port on our western seaboard, Fleetwood is now a shadow of its former self. Our industry has been almost destroyed by the actions of successive governments over the past 25 years.

Mr Hague knew that there would be no big crowds on the dock. That did not deter him. He came to see the leaders of Fleetwood's 150 fishermen (not too long ago we had 1,200) and to discuss our problems.

We spoke to him for 30 minutes and came away impressed, not only with the man himself, but with his enthusiasm and obvious capability. I got the firm impression he was committed to redressing past mistakes.

At long last we firmly believe that we have a major political party which is on the fishermen's side. We thank William Hague for that and wish him well.

Yours faithfully,
MARK HAMER
(Secretary),
Fleetwood Fishermen's Association,
19 Poulton Street,
Fleetwood, Lancashire,
October 7.

From Mr John Raybould

Sir, In the first extract of his authorised biography, *Major: A Political Life* (October 2) see also extracts, October 3, 4, 7. Dr Anthony Seldon quotes the former Prime Minister as saying on May 1, with words that recalled the theatrical tradition of his parents: "When the curtain falls, it is time to get off the stage."

I prefer: "You should get off the stage while they are still applauding." Perhaps if the Conservative Party had heeded this when Lady Thatcher was still in power (and conducted a more decorous change of leadership instead of unceremoniously shoving her out) we might not be witnessing the party in its current sad and ignominious freefall.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN RAYBOULD,
88 Lawrence Moorings,
Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire,
October 3.

Letters for publication should carry contact telephone numbers. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 0171-762 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Taking sides on the right to drive

From Mr Mark McArthur-Christie

Sir, It was extremely encouraging to read today's letter from Professor Stanley Feldman and Professor Vincent Marks challenging the popular view of cars as polluting monsters and pointing out that emissions from buses, coaches and diesel trains constitute a greater threat to health than those from cars.

Cars are getting cleaner. A modern petrol car produces less than 10 per cent of the pollution of its pre-1993 counterpart, and emissions are set to fall by 50 per cent over the next ten years without the additional legislation already planned. One bus, on the other hand, produces more particulates than 128 cars and more oxides of nitrogen than 39 cars (figures from the Natural Environment Technology Centre). However, these are not figures trumpeted by those claiming concern for the environment.

As your correspondents point out, even if buses and bicycles are the current politically correct modes of transport, cars are both convenient and extremely useful. We need to recognise that owning and driving a car is not tantamount to environmental destruction, but an essential freedom vital to both individuals and the economy.

Yours faithfully,
M. MCARTHUR-CHRISTIE
(Committee member,
Association of British Drivers),
160 Farmer's Close,
Witney, Oxfordshire,
October 1.

From the Director General
of the Confederation of
Passenger Transport UK

Sir, There are some fundamental flaws in the reasoning by Professors Feldman and Marks.

True, one bus or coach produces a higher level of particulate emissions than one car. However, the average bus carries the occupants of 20 average cars, so emissions per passenger mile are much lower. In addition, diesels produce around 20 per cent less

CO₂ than an equivalent petrol engine, thus lessening the threat of global warming.

Buses and coaches are getting cleaner in parallel with cars. European standards for particulate and other emissions were stepped up last October, and will become even more demanding over the next decade.

The reality is that greater use of buses and coaches by people who currently use cars will relieve congestion, reduce pollution levels and improve the urban environment.

Yours faithfully,
VERONICA PALMER,
Director General,
Confederation of Passenger
Transport UK,
Imperial House,
15-19 Kingsway, WC2,
October 1.

From Mr Timothy H. Jones

Sir, The decision by the French Government to ban private vehicles with odd and even-numbered licence plates on alternate days (report, October 2) appears to be a brilliant solution to tackling smog pollution in Paris.

However, I believe that in several European countries where this ruling has already been introduced those who can afford to do so are simply likely to buy two cars, one with an odd-numbered and the other with an even-numbered registration, thereby increasing the overall numbers of cars on the road.

In Italy, which has the highest number of cars per head of population, the problem is compounded further by the effect which owning an extra car has on the purchasing of new vehicles. Not being able to afford a new car and a second-hand one, many people are obliged to own two cheaper second-hand vehicles. What is worse, they keep these cars and drive them when they are unroadworthy or pollution hazards.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY H. JONES,
25-3 Edina Place, Edinburgh 7,
October 2.

Art and censorship

From Mr Ralph Blumenau

Sir, Dr Justin Seabrook repeats the mantra, "Censorship is not an answer to offensive material" (letter, October 3; see also letters, September 18, 19, 29) in defence of the Royal Academy Sensation exhibition. There is a distinction to be made between censorship from outside (eg, by the Government) and self-censorship.

If, as I hope, Dr Seabrook abstains from foul language in private, let alone in public, he is rightly applying self-censorship. That is what some of us expect of the RA. It is not duty-bound to display everything that describes itself (or is described by Mr Seabrook) as art.

If I set my mind to it, I expect I could submit something to the RA and claim that it is a work of art. It might be quite bland and inoffensive or it might be disgusting. In either case I think the RA should reject it because my productions would not qualify as art; and if it did so, it would not occur to me to complain of censorship.

Yours faithfully,
RALPH BLUMENAU,
111 Princes House,
50 Kensington Park Road, W11.

From Mr Michael S. Bruce

Sir, Dr Seabrook's letter does not materially contribute to this discus-

sion. First, he demands tolerance in artistic matters, yet offers no definition of art. Until we can agree on a definition, this will be an empty form of words. Pornographers, sadists and vandals have all claimed that their activities are art; does Dr Seabrook accept such claims at face value, or does he draw a line somewhere? And if so, where?

Even if we concede the point in full, there will still be a problem. Art, however fine, involving serious human or animal distress is, arguably, immoral. Bullfighting, child pornography and blasphemy have all been claimed as art: they all delight some people and distress others. It is not enough (in any of these cases) to argue that a sensitive person may simply turn his back: the distress is caused by the mere existence of the offence.

To safeguard civilised existence we need restraints. Compromises between competing principles are forced on us. I suggest that we should discuss the uses and limits of censorship in this context. The likely outcome of a debate conducted in the absolute terms implied by Dr Seabrook's letter is not an absence of censorship or a triumph of tolerance — it is over-regulation of our right to free expression.

Yours faithfully,
M. S. BRUCE,
3 Wistow Road, Selby, Yorkshire,
October 3.

Morton and Red Cross

From Mr David Hobman

Sir, The possible decision by the British Red Cross Society, and other charities associated with Princess Diana, to refuse a donation from Andrew Morton and his publishers [report, October 6; see also letter, October 7] is certainly mistaken, and possibly illegal.

Some years ago, when I was Director of Age Concern England, we were one of a number of national charities selected as potential beneficiaries of donations from a group of workers who had refused to join a union within a closed-shop agreement. The arrangement reached followed an approved procedure.

We were then attacked, and threatened with legal action, by a group hos-

tile to the closed shop. As it happened, the money did not materialise.

However, our legal advisers said it was not for us to judge the motives of donors. Unless gifts are known to be the result of a criminal act, the responsibility of charitable trustees is to accept donations for the benefit of the cause they serve and to use it well.

Even then, it isn't always easy to identify the source when an envelope stuffed with ancient banknotes arrives without identification.

Forgiveness of sins, and the expiation for ancient crimes, are part and parcel of the same process. It's called Christianity.

Yours etc,
DAVID HOBMAN,
Robinsons, George's Lane,
Storrington, West Sussex,
October 6.

Cancer trials

From Dr John Radford

Sir, In your issue of September 22, under the heading "Fertility hope for boys who survive cancer," you report extensively on the experimental treatment planned for a two-year-old boy about to receive sterilising chemotherapy. He is to have testicular tissue removed and stored in liquid nitrogen, in the hope of giving him a chance to father children in the future.

Let the expectations of parents of other young boys so affected are raised unjustifiably, I wish to point out that the technique described has not yet been shown to be effective even in the human adult male. Until such evidence is available I believe the collection and storage of this tissue from young boys is highly questionable.

Since May 1995 a research group under my chairmanship, supported by the Kay Kendall Leukaemia Fund, has been investigating the possibility

of using a patient's own spermatogonial cells (collected from the testis and frozen before chemotherapy) to reinitiate fertility after the completion of treatment. So far, testicular tissue has been harvested from seven young men and the first reinitiation of spermatogonial cells is planned for next year. Only if these reinitiations prove successful would we consider applying the technique to children.

Meanwhile, we believe that experiments of the type you report should be confined to tightly regulated clinical trials, where efficacy and safety can be monitored and objective analysis of costs and benefits to the patient is certain.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN RADFORD
(Consultant physician and senior lecturer in medical oncology),
Christie Hospital NHS Trust,
Wilmslow Road,
Withington, Manchester,
September 26.

Call for a rethink on school French

From Mr Richard Branson

Sir, For historic reasons French is the compulsory foreign language taught in our schools. My daughter is about to do French in the sixth form, not out of choice but because she's never had the chance to do Spanish.

So much of the world (including 50 per cent of North Americans) now speaks Spanish, it is the second international language after English. Most of the popular holiday destinations visited by British people now are Spanish, not French-speaking. And it's an easier language to learn.

Should we not be considering whether Spanish should replace French as our second language?

Kind regards,
RICHARD BRANSON
(Chairman),
Virgin Group of Companies,
120 Campden Hill Road, W8,
October 7.

Solti and Bartok

From Mr Peter Timar

Sir, I read with surprise in today's *Diary* that the Hungarian Ambassador, Mr Gabor Szentivanyi, is hoping that Sir Georg Solti's final resting place will be in Budapest because, as he says, "he is one of our all-time greats. He ranks with Bartok."

Sir Georg Solti was definitely an eminent Hungarian conductor who died away from his homeland. But whether he was pre-eminent amongst all the other very eminent Hungarian conductors (Reiner, Dorati, Szell, Kertesz), who also rest in foreign lands, is a matter of personal opinion. Is Mr Szentivanyi planning to take them all back to Hungary?

As for ranking Solti with Bartok, Mr Szentivanyi (whom I suspect may be more knowledgeable about diplomacy than music) should realise that a conductor — no matter how great and popular — is only a mere interpreter and as such cannot be ranked with the creativity of a composer, and especially not with the genius of Bartok.

What next? Karajan ranks with Beethoven?

Yours faithfully,
PETER TIMAR,
14 Sunny Hill, NW4,
October 3.

Brum culture

From Mr Wilfred Morgan

Sir, Neither Shakespeare nor Dr Johnson would have spoken with a Birmingham accent (leading article, "Brum's the word," October 1; letter, October 3).

The people of Stratford and Lichfield do not speak like Brummies, and I suspect that in the times of Shakespeare and Johnson the differences of accents would have been more marked because there was less communication between places that were miles apart.

However, as a Brummie, I take pleasure that someone should link the names of two such eminent people with Birmingham. Nobody to my knowledge who was born and lived a major part of their life in Birmingham has ever risen to national prominence in the arts. The city of a thousand trades is no breeding ground for romantics.

Yours faithfully,
WILF MORGAN,
159 Marsh Lane,
Erdington, Birmingham,
October 3.

Ask a silly question . . .

From Mr D. L. B. Hartley

Sir, When I was a boy at Lancaster Royal Grammar School an examination was held on the last day of the summer term for the purpose of awarding endowed scholarship prizes (letters, September 1 — October 4). In answer to the question: "What was a Sabbath Day's Journey?" a fellow pupil wrote, "A Sabbath Day's Journey is from Lancaster to Morecambe Odeon." (Cinemas were closed in Lancaster on Sundays but open in Morecambe, four miles away.)

He had thought he was leaving school that term, but his family's arrangements were changed and when he came back to school in September he was caned. That was in 1933.

Yours truly,
DESMOND HARTLEY,
Chyll Bank,
Brook Road, Windermere, Cumbria,
October 5.

Thanks, but no thanks

From Mr Nicholas Neve

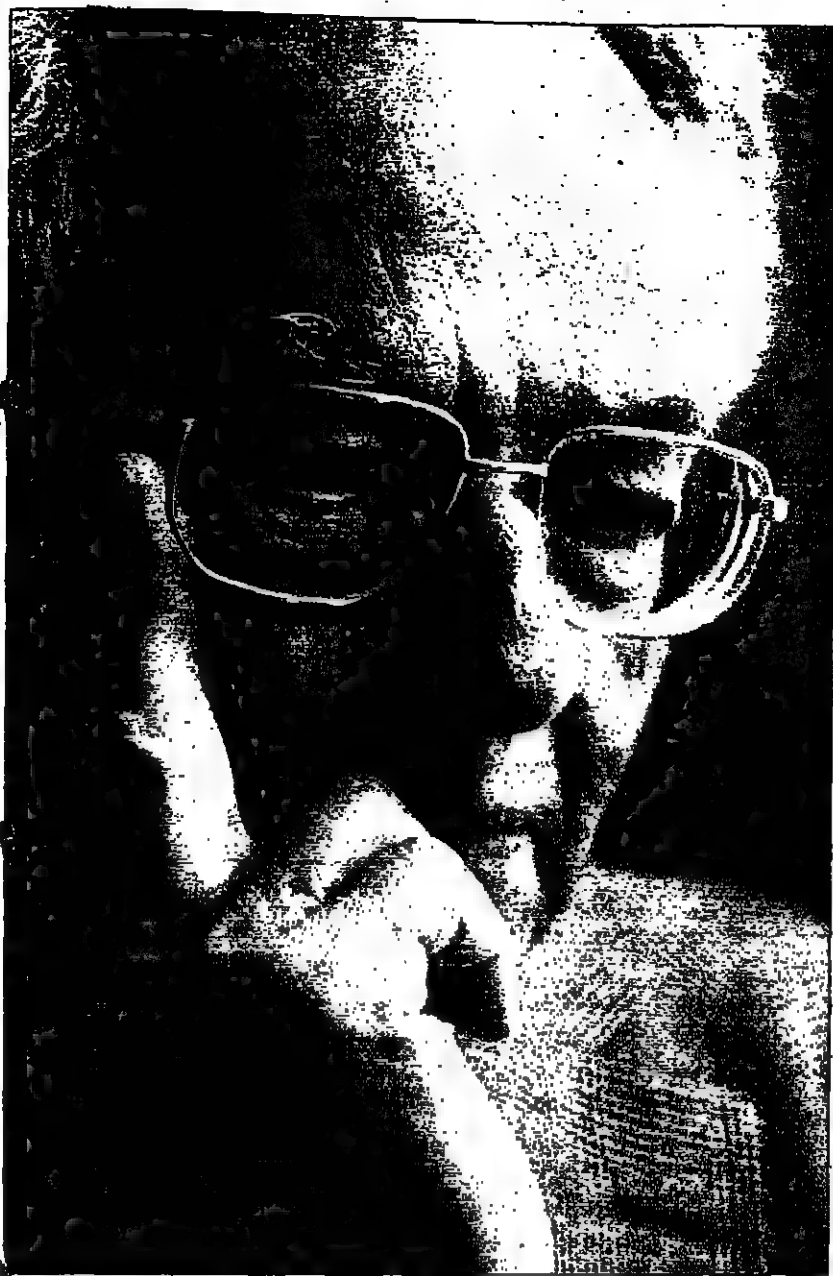
Sir, Having also become eligible for a giant electronic frog which says "Ribbit, Ribbit" (letter, October 5), I obtained one and have found it excellent both for entertaining small grandchildren indoors and as a deterrent to neighbours' cats in the garden.

For moles, an electronic card which repeatedly plays "Happy Birthday" seems more effective.

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS NEVE,
Eynhallow,
The Purlieu, Upper Colwall,
Malvern, Worcestershire,
October 6.

OBITUARIES

GEORGE URBAN



George Urban, former Director of Radio Free Europe and Director of the Centre for Policy Studies, died on October 3 aged 76. He was born on April 12, 1921.

Hungarian by birth, George Urban became one of the leading organisers in the West of the democratic front against communism during the Cold War. In his work for the BBC World Service and for Radio Free Europe, and in his many interviews, seminars and books, he uncovered the true workings of communism, and looked forward to a post-communist world. He was a great admirer of Margaret Thatcher, and one of her advisers on international relations as communism crumbled, but he famously fell out with her over her attitude to Germany.

Born in Miskolc, near Budapest, Urban belonged to the generation of brilliant East European intellectuals who emigrated at the end of the war, realising that there was no future for them under communism. He had studied at Budapest University, and in 1948 was accepted by London University to work for a doctorate on German poetry and language. Simultaneously, he joined the BBC as a broadcaster in the Hungarian section of the European Service. Here he gained experience in a kind of serious and committed journalism that he was to take to new heights in his broadcast conversations and printed question-and-answer interviews with many of the leading commentators on the Cold War.

In 1957, Urban published *The Nineteen Days*, an account of the Hungarian uprising that had begun the previous October. It was acclaimed for its description of life under communism. He was later to write studies of Stalinism and Maoism.

Urban left the BBC after a fierce policy disagreement over Cyprus, and moved to Munich as a senior researcher at Radio Free Europe, the American-funded broadcaster which acted as a surrogate for a free press behind the Iron Curtain. As he later wrote, "the complicated process of speaking to twenty nations (in as many

languages), each with its proud traditions and aspirations, was strewn with natural pitfalls", but he managed to hold in check the sometimes squabbling groups of émigrés from different countries, and promoted a learned and humane approach. As well as colleagues from London of the calibre of Michael Oakeshott, he invited contributions from intellectuals across the Continent, and Radio Free Europe became a kind of East European university of the air. He was a mild-mannered, courteous and scholarly man, and he extended his personal style of concise understatement to the radio broadcasts for which he was responsible. They spoke louder than any amount of propaganda.

Particularly memorable were his broadcast conversations, and as his reputation increased he began contributing 10,000-word interviews to Melvin Laskey's *Encounter*. These pieces, about figures such as Raymond Aron, Arnold Toynbee and Arthur Koestler, benefited from Urban's own immense knowledge, the depth of his research into the subjects, and his genuine probing for the truth, with all its complications. The interviews were the not result of single meetings, but were meetings — and mappings — of minds. Questions would be followed up as they were drafted and revised to the satisfaction of both parties.

He also joined the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Geneva, running a series of European seminars on the subject of European unity, in which he was a passionate believer.

However, after 1967 it was revealed that all three of these organisations — Radio Free Europe, the Congress for Cultural Freedom and *Encounter* — were being funded by the CIA. After the uproar — during which Stephen Spender resigned from *Encounter* — the funding petered out, and Urban found himself out of a job. In 1968 he moved to Los Angeles, as a senior research associate of the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Southern California. Here, with Roger Swearingen, he founded the journal *Studies in Comparative Communism* to give a detailed picture of national differences and the workings of

the various regimes. This work, however, was ahead of its time, and ran up against early forms of political correctness. Although he was later to be a visiting fellow at Indiana University and a research fellow at Harvard, Urban's stay in California lasted only two years, before he returned to England as a writer, broadcaster and adviser. He proceeded to organise many seminars, attracting a wide spectrum of distinguished thinkers. Urban's interviews resulted in several books, including *Can We Survive Our Future?* (1972, with Michael Glenn), a symposium about the state of the planet, and *Détente* (1976), a series of discussions about East-West relations with experts such as Leopold Labedz, Sir William Hayter and Dean Rusk.

From 1983 to his retirement in 1986, Urban was in Munich as the Director of Radio Free Europe, bringing fresh impetus to "the unmasking of communism". He used to tell the tale of a visit to Hungary at the end of the communist era when he asked a taxi driver if he knew the address of a certain dissident priest. The taxi driver stopped at a phone box and suggested calling Radio Free Europe, saying that it could always be relied on for such information.

During the Reagan-Thatcher era, Urban was part of the inner circle of foreign policy advisers. He was a director of the Centre for Policy Studies and on the board of the Centre for Research into Communist Economies and the advisory council of the Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies. In 1983, *The Times* ran three extensive extracts from his *Encounter* conversation with Jean Kirkpatrick, President Reagan's hawkish Ambassador to the United Nations. The surprise was that the gentlemanly scholar was more hawkish than the Republican politician, urging that America need not make concessions to the Soviet Union, but could rather openly support dissident movements.

In 1987, as perestroika was beginning, Urban told the Centre for Policy Studies that the West's demands on Gorbachev should begin with withdrawal from Afghanistan, an end to Soviet interference

in South America, and withdrawal of troops and military bases from Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Given Urban's influence at the time, all this gave notice that the Cold War would end not with a compromise, but with a victory over what Reagan was later to call "the evil empire". The following year, some of Urban's interviews were collected in the present volume *Can the Soviet System Survive Reform?* The thesis was that it could not. Urban himself argued that Gorbachev's wish to transform the communist "glacis" without breaking the socialist ice was impractical, and that either hardline dogmas would triumph or communism was doomed.

But some of Urban's own hopes, too, were to prove illusory. In March 1990, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Margaret Thatcher attended a meeting at Chequers with Douglas Hurd, Lord Dacre of Glinton, Norman Stone, Timothy Garton Ash and others to discuss German reunification. She surprised and appalled most of those present by her opposition to German reunification and her resistance to the great European project that was going inexorably forwards. Her views about Europe, Urban later wrote, were not very different "from the Alf Garnett version of history". Margaret Thatcher had spent years being cajoled and bullied into accepting Helmut Kohl's ideas about the future of the European Union and her patience was at an end; but Urban could not see that the flaws in the European Union were becoming crevasses, down one of which the Prime Minister was shortly to disappear.

After his 70th birthday, Urban withdrew from many of his activities to write his book *Diplomacy and Disillusion at the Court of Margaret Thatcher*, which was serialised in *The Times* last year, and his memoirs, *Radio Free Europe and the Pursuit of Democracy*, which Yale University Press is to publish next February. George Urban was twice married, first, and briefly, in Hungary during the war to Ika, and secondly in London in 1957 to Patricia. He is survived by his second wife, their son and daughter, and a son from his first marriage.

PHILIP TURNER

Philip Turner, artist, died on September 29, aged 79. He was born on July 2, 1918.

BEST-KNOWN as a sculptor working in bronze, Philip Turner was also accomplished in other media, which he taught in art schools until his retirement at 65. He worked in wood and stone, and painted in oils and watercolour.

Brought up in Sussex and Wiltshire, Turner was educated at Marlborough College, where he took up art because, as he said, "if you went out sketching, you were allowed to miss school sports". Moving to London, he studied at St Martin's and the Slade School, and in the studio of the sculptor Leon Underwood.

In 1940, Turner enlisted in the Berkshires and was sent to the Mediterranean, where he was twice wounded. He went on to fight in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Greece; never seeking a commission, he was content as a sergeant. During the fighting in Sicily, he was asked to design a battlefield memorial to the dead of The Parachute Regiment. It stands beside the main road north of Syracuse. In 1946 he returned to the

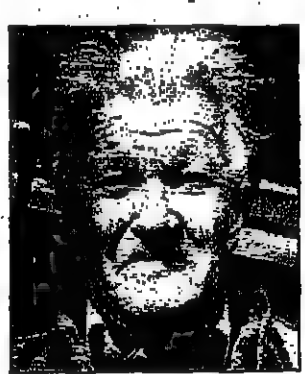
Slade and gained an art teacher's diploma at London University. He then taught part-time at art schools in Farnham, Wiltshire, Ealing and Harrow. Sculpture was his particular love. Finding the cost of the lost-wax process of casting metal and the foundry fees prohibitive, he began experimenting for himself. The results were his startlingly vivid figures. The *Art Review* declared that his "extraordinary transformation of traditional forms into fluid, ascending or windswept lines and broken, eroded panels of metal gives [his work] a disturbing individuality".

Eric Newton wrote of one figure that it "looked as though it had suddenly sat down and become paper-thin bronze as it did so, and that Philip Turner had caught it in the act as surely as Degas could catch a ballet girl's pirouette".

In 1957, Turner married the travel writer Elisabeth de Stroumillo, with whom he was to have three daughters. After a honeymoon to Greece, they returned to rent rooms for nearly a year in a village in the Peloponnese. They continued to travel frequently, though they made their home

in Chelsea. At the time the area was known as the artists' quarter of London, and Turner fitted in happily with its amiable bohemianism.

The couple bought a condemned stable yard, where Turner began to build his own studio-house. He had picked up some knowledge of building from technical colleges and from friendly artisans, and took some of his raw materials from skips, or from



neighbouring Victorian streets had been demolished, to be replaced by looming red-brick towers. Combining his own work with teaching, Turner showed his work in many exhibitions in London, the provinces and abroad. But genial as he was, Turner reacted strongly against what he described as "flattened", high-flown criticism from those who were not artists themselves, so he quarrelled with a number of people who might have been useful to him.

His commissions included a Virgin and Child for the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Primrose Hill, London, and a bronze altar-front and life-size stone figure of St Ethelred for St Ethelred's. At the opposite ends of his range, he made jewellery and rough-cast stucco busts for the garden with hollow heads that could be planted with flowers.

After his retirement from teaching, he spent more time in a much-changed Chelsea, where his tall figure was familiar on his bicycle, at the Chelsea Arts Club and at the Stephen Bartley Gallery, where he exhibited. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.

ANDREW KEIR

Andrew Keir, actor, died in hospital in London on October 5 aged 71. He was born in Shotts, Lanarkshire, on April 3, 1926.

ALTHOUGH he had a career of considerable range and undeniable distinction on the stage, in films and on television, Andrew Keir remains, perhaps, most clearly in the mind for his rendering of Professor Quatermass in the Hammer science fiction film *Quatermass and the Pit* (1967). This had much to do with the thoughtfulness he brought to the role in what was an unusually thoughtful film. Hammer, in its heyday, was not generally associated with such brain-teasing matter.

Indeed, many critics felt that the author Nigel Neale had produced a concept that was almost too complex to be assimilated by the average cinema audience at a single sitting. The film was in fact a version of an earlier (1958-59) and immensely successful BBC television series which had been able to develop its curious theme — the skeletons of a race of insect-like extraterrestrial visitors are discovered in their long-buried spaceship in the London Underground — over the much greater time-span afforded by its six episodes.

Be that as it may, Keir was ideal as the professor who has to fight the obtuseness of the Army (who naturally want to start by blowing up the spaceship and its dead occupants) to enable him to plumb the mysterious secrets of the human race's distant past. With *Rob Roy* (1955), in which he played the Duke of Argyll, it remained his favourite film role.

Andrew Keir was born one of a family of six boys and a girl in Lanarkshire coal-mining belt midway between Edinburgh and Glasgow, and left school at 14 to go down the pit (his sister went into service). His stage career began in an amateur dramatics production at the Miners' Welfare



Andrew Keir, left, and James Donald, with alien visitant in the film *Quatermass and the Pit*, 1967

Hall. He had gone to meet a friend there and one of the cast had failed to turn up. Keir was roped in to read the part and thereafter played in most of the miners' club productions.

The club competed in the finals of the amateur festival at Inverness, then regarded as being a showcase for Scottish drama, and was placed second by Tyrone Guthrie. Keir's own performance was noted and he was offered a job as a professional actor by the Unity Theatre in Glasgow.

The war was on and mining was a reserved occupation from which it was not easy to obtain release. Fortunately, a friendly doctor diagnosed pneumoconiosis and obtained him immediate release from the pit.

Before six months at the Unity had elapsed Keir's work there came to the attention of

Guthrie who invited him to join the company at the Glasgow Citizens Theatre. Keir was ever afterwards to acknowledge his debt to the Citizens and to Guthrie. "Citizens was my training ground. We did a different play every three weeks and we did everything. You name it, we did it." And of Guthrie: "He inspired the team spirit on the stage. If another actor was carrying the scene and the audience was with the actor, you gave them the ball and let them run with it. When it was their turn they did the same for you. It made me a team player."

Keir made his screen debut with a small role in *The Lady Craves Excitement* (1950) but had more to get his teeth into in 1952 with *The Brave Don't Cry*, which starred John Gregson in an admirably well-done, low-budget picture

about the rescue of a hundred pitmen from a Scottish mine disaster. Based on the *Knocknashock* disaster of 1936, this was material highly congenial to Reid. In the role as one of the rescued miners he had the script's famous last line: "I'm still alive, all of the lift after being brought to the surface he asked what had won the 3.30."

After a number of parts in films ranging from the Ealing comedy *The Maggie* (1953) to the big budget sinking-of-the-*Titanic* drama *A Night to Remember* (1958), Keir embarked on what might be called the Hammer horror phase of his career. This involved him in *Pirates of Blood River* (1961), a blood and thunder adventure in which he played alongside Christopher Lee; *Dracula, Prince of Darkness* (1966) — again, Lee installed as the bloodthirsty count; *Quatermass and the Pit*; and *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb* (1971).

But he also had roles in a number of other films such as *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* (1969) and *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1978). *Rob Roy* was his last picture. But the stage was not completely forgotten. He played Thomas Cromwell in the inaugural production of Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* in the West End of London in 1960 and was a trade union leader in Lionel Bart's *Maggie May* (1964). In Dublin he played Dag Hammarskjöld in *Conor Cruise O'Brien's Murderous Angels* (1971) about the shooting down of the UN Secretary General's aircraft.

He was also busy in television. *Ivanhoe*, *Kluge* and *Macbeth* were among the many classic adaptations in which he featured, and *Togean* and *Dr Finlay's Casebook* were characteristic series in which he found roles.

He married in 1948 Julia Wallace, by whom he had three daughters and two sons. This marriage was dissolved in 1971 in which year he married Joyce Parker Scott. She and the children of his first marriage survive him.

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THE MOMENT I KNEW THAT SADAT TRUSTED ME

By Shimon Peres
Leader of the Israeli opposition Labour Party
When Dr Henry Kissinger told us, after having met President Sadat for the first time, that he was an impressive person, a rather handsome man with considerable charm, we raised our eyebrows. That was not what we gathered from his pictures and how we saw his image. We thought of him as a cold man, a remote and distant person and rather capricious. Later, when we met for the first time, face to face, we were immediately struck by his strange charm — a very unusual one — and by his capacity for winning your attention and your trust... I believe I gained his confidence as a result of his unique way in judging people. When we met for the first time for a very long conversation, Sadat started it by proposing "Let's speak freely and with complete candour and entirely off the record. Nothing will be revealed by me and I believe that nothing will be revealed by you".
I responded immediately by saying: "Answer, you are wrong. It is my duty to warn you that in spite of the fact that I am the leader

ON THIS DAY

October 8, 1981
Mohammad Ammar El-Sadat (1918-81), assassinated on the 6th by Muslim extremists, had been President of Egypt since 1970. In 1977 he paid a momentous visit to Israel and in 1978 at Camp David signed a peace accord with Menachem Begin, Prime Minister of Israel. The two were awarded the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize.
of the Opposition, you must take into consideration that every word you may tell me I will repeat to Menachem Begin". He looked surprised by my reaction but ended by saying: "Bravo, Shimon — now I know that I can talk to you with full confidence".
During this conversation which took place three years ago he said his designated successor was Hosni Mubarak, saying: "He is a good man and a sincere one. I keep him fully informed so that when necessary he should be able to continue the policies I have initiated. I consider him a stable person though I do not yet know how he will confront the Arab public

opinion when he will feel that the peace process will have to pass through stormy weather". Wisdom weighed for him more than luck. In the early seventies, immediately after gaining power he adhered to the strategy of war against Israel. This strategy reached its summit in October 1973. Afterwards he selected an entirely different course — the strategy of peace which reached its peak when he made his historic trip to Jerusalem, in September 1977. One must emphasize that his great courage was revealed not only by his voyage to Jerusalem but by his persistent struggle during the following four years to make peace into a new reality in face of protests, doubt and opposition.
For us, as Israelis, it is hard to forgive the surprise attack he started upon us on the Day of Atonement, but the truth is that a decision to attack us could have been taken by any Egyptian leader preceding Sadat, as it in fact happened when even King Farouk decided to attack us. Yet one can hardly imagine any predecessor of Sadat, in Egypt, or any other contemporary Arab leader in the Middle East, who could have taken a decision for peace. This was a decision of rare bravery, speaking historically and not just personally. Without him, I do not believe that Egypt would have made peace with Israel.

Leaving Best for better

Would you give up an editorship and £60,000 a year for marriage? Julie Akhurst has, says Carol Midgley

Julie Akhurst, Editor of the women's weekly *Best*, has surprised colleagues by quitting to get married, declared the *UK Press Gazette* on its front page this week. In truth the reactions of some of those colleagues, says Ms Akhurst, was closer to shock and outright incredulity.

Why on earth, they wondered, would someone bother to beat off fierce competition, secure the coveted editorship of a national magazine and an estimated £60,000 salary, only to give it all up to become a wife and mother? More astonishingly, she was leaving *London* to move in with her boyfriend, Steve Brown, in Bradford.

Such earth-shattering life decisions have a habit of making front-page news these days. Last month America went into a reverie when Brenda Barnes, the 43-year-old president and chief executive of PepsiCo North America, surrendered her £1 million salary plus bonuses and announced she was quitting to spend more time with the children. In 1995 Penny Hughes caused similar upset when she relinquished her position as president of Coca-Cola, Great Britain and Ireland, and a few months later Linda Kelsey left as Editor of *She Magazine* to spend more time with her son.

Quitting while she was at the top, however, appears to have been part of Julie Akhurst's life-plan all along, despite being a graduate of St Hilda's, Oxford, and pursuing a rapid route to the top in magazines. She began her career as a secretary in a publishing company, moving to *Reader's Digest* as commissioning editor. She then became features editor on *Bauer's Take A Break* and was later headhunted by Alric Futura to launch *Thurs Life* in Australia, where she stayed for two years.

"I had always decided that I would give being editor two years at *Best* and then think about moving up with Steve," she says. "Then I thought, who is imposing this deadline? Me. I have done 19½ months, so what is stopping me from going now apart from myself? Life is too short."

"Having children has always been very important to me, and I don't want to raise kids in London."



Julie Akhurst: "I wanted to be a magazine editor and now I have done it"

"People have reacted in different ways, but mainly with shock. The most common reaction I have heard is 'How can you give up all this?' Which seems to imply that the kind of life I want has little or no value. That choosing to be a mother is not what you do if you are clever. But I have always known that this is what I would do."

At 33, Ms Akhurst has decided that

she has had enough of struggling to work through the London traffic each day from her flat in Crouch End and the strain of sustaining a long-distance relationship.

It must also be pointed out that now is a particularly gruelling time for the women's magazine market in general, with more titles creeping into the already crowded arena and men's

magazines beginning to steal a march over women's. *Best*, which Ms Akhurst took over in 1995, was averaging weekly sales of 551,000 in the first half of 1996. In the first half of 1997 that average had fallen to 512,000.

She concedes the job was hard: "It is very difficult in the women's weekly magazine market at the moment. You are constantly struggling to hold the figures up."

Like increasing numbers of women, Ms Akhurst did not want to get into the cycle of working long hours, having a nanny and rarely seeing her children.

"Officially it's 10 until 6, but you find yourself coming in at 8.30 and working straight through to 7.30pm without a lunchbreak. I am not saying that's particularly bad, but you couldn't do that with children. Well, I wouldn't want to anyway."

She met her fiancé, 36, who runs part of a builders' merchant business in Bradford, two years ago and they will marry next year. He offered to try to find work in London if she wanted to stay in her job but for Julie, there was no dilemma. "I love London — I have lived here on and off since I was 22 — but it is time to move on," she says.

"It has been very difficult conducting a long-distance relationship. Each weekend either I will go up to Bradford to see him or he will come down to London to see me. We tend to stay over Sunday nights so, because he starts work at 8am, Steve has to get up at 3am to drive back up to Yorkshire. If I am in Bradford I will get the early train and go straight into work. After a while that starts to grind you down."

"I wanted to be an editor of a magazine and now I have done it so I can happily put it to one side and say I have got that out of my system. I don't have a feeling of under-achievement because I have done it and no one can ever take that away."

"People might think I will get bored but, without wanting to sound arrogant, I think you can choose whether you are going to be bored at home or not. My mother always had a very imaginative attitude to it. She loved bringing us up and I hope I can be like that as well. I think about freetime as a good halfway house."

"At work a couple of people have said they agree with me and a couple have even come up and said 'I think you are really lucky'."

"I don't think a career alone can totally fulfil you. It is like going towards the rainbow and when you get there the rainbow's not there any more."

"People who already have children might think I am idealising it and I might be, but we will have to see. Time will tell."

The BBC is 75 next week. Happy returns?

Awkward questions on Auntie's birthday

Held on to your hats. Everyone who switches on their television set or radio over the next few weeks is likely to face a gale of nostalgia and self-congratulation. The BBC will be 75 next week and the anniversary will be very difficult to avoid.

There will be special programmes on every BBC outlet, from *The Story of Pop Radio* and *A Tribute to the BBC Dance Orchestra* on Radio 2 to *Radio Memories* and *Auntie Through the Looking Glass* on Radio 4. There is even a special edition of the longest-running programme in the history of broadcasting, *The Daily Service*.

Television offers no escape, either. There will be a history of broadcasting on *Blue Peter*, a special edition of *One Foot in the Past* devoted to Broadcasting House, and *Auntie: The Inside Story*, a four-part "warts-and-all" account of the corporation and the personalities who have made it what it is.

The BBC promises that the series "does not avoid the controversies which have kept the BBC in the headlines", although in the interests of making history rather than current affairs, it stops diplomatically at 1987.

The BBC has indeed much to celebrate as an institution, and is clearly still developing and mixing it rather freely in the intensely competitive modern world of broadcasting where ratings usually rule.

Only one thing seems to be missing among the welter of *Muffin the Mule* stamps, free nostalgia postcards, free BBC CD-Roms for schools and great moments of BBC sound for those interested in buying the double CD. There is little sense of any debate about the present or future of the BBC, any questioning of how the place is run, or how it could be made more efficient or more responsive to the British public. Certainly no one is asking hard questions about how long a compulsory universal licence fee can continue to exist in a 200-channel world when the BBC is trying to make some more money on the side by launching new subscription channels.

The BBC is, however, linking the backslapping of its anniversary celebrations with a series of promotional films — advertising in its last name — for the licence fee.

One long advertorial, *Perfect Day*, featuring a succession of distinguished singers putting together the song of that name in swatches, has already appeared. Much more is on the way. Everyone from Mikhail Gorbachev and Shimon Peres to the Dalai Lama, Seamus Heaney and Jack Charlton, has been corralled to take part in short films endorsing the public service values of the

BBC, and by implication the public service method of paying for them.

It all seems very odd: like politicians running for office even though election day is years away. It might have the undesired side-effect of exciting advertisers by demonstrating, yet again, just how effective the BBC could be as an advertising medium.

In fact, the argument for retention of the licence, despite the rough justice of what amounts to a regressive poll tax, is a very strong one. Of course, the BBC would survive and possibly flourish if the licence fee was abolished and replaced by voluntary subscription, but the corporation would no longer be a national broadcaster and it is very unlikely that it could afford to be a patron of the arts.

It would be even easier to put advertising on the BBC and destroy the remnants of public service and diversity in the TV schedule.

The BBC's importance as an institution is not in question; its management ought to be. Some form of public audit of its performance is required that goes far beyond simplistic comparisons of programme costs per hour.

It is a task that could, at least in principle, be performed by the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee. Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, suggested that to make the BBC more accountable,

the BBC Chairman, Sir Christopher Blundell, should appear before the committee once a year to discuss the corporation's affairs. It is an invitation Sir Christopher has taken up.

Many interesting questions could be asked. Why, for instance, are there some 160 expensive people in "policy and strategic adviser" functions dotted around the corporation? Why, if anything, like such a concentration of brainpower, is being paid for by licence payers, is it necessary to have expensive external consultants in almost permanent residence in the corporation?

It is wise to be asking questions about the BBC's future. The next five years, so that up to £1 billion can be spent on all things digital over the same period, when it could be ten years before most licence payers have digital viewing equipment?

There are many more questions that should be asked of the BBC. But if the select committee were to get answers to those few, it would be progress — and we could all get back to enjoying Tony Robinson tracing the relationship between God and the BBC in his history of religious broadcasting, and the BBC's "landmarks of laughter" in Muriel and Norrie's *Flourish Old Auntie*.

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مكتبة الشامل

I want to be in the media

MEDIA STUDIES is one of the fastest-growing disciplines in higher education. This week nearly 700 eager students are starting a media degree, hopeful that it will secure a job in television or the press. But do too many of them see the course as an easy way in? Do too many leave feeling that they are better qualified than they really are? And do employers prefer to train their staff from scratch? More importantly, are colleges raising false hopes by offering ever more media places when the jobs are not there? Henry Bonsu and Sandy Parker consider the facts

Make contacts, get discovered

The hardest thing about running a media course, said a friend the other day, "is preparing all those young people for jobs that don't exist." I expressed some sympathy — there is no satisfaction in providing qualifications that have little value — but I have more sympathy for those on the media-studies production line, who often find their way to my door.

Usually the callers are young, black and female, and their opening words are: "Hi, I was told I should contact you if I want to get into the media." I have never edited a programme, but I am approached like this about once a month by individuals hooked on the promise of flexible hours in a "creative" field. Armed with industry-accredited qualifications, they are prepared to enter the market at any level, believing that within a year or two they'll be a regular on-screen presence on national television.

Some callers have masked their true intention, claiming to be interested in news journalism, but finally admitting neither to listening to Radio 4, nor regularly reading a broadsheet newspaper.

One young man recently rang asking for help in getting into "news and current affairs". During the conversation he confessed that he really wanted to be a youth and entertainment presenter. "I'm into media in general. Once I get in, I can work out what to do next," he explained.

I try to tackle such haze by explaining that it pays to narrow down one's interest, research the job in question, and write to a named producer with whose programme you are familiar.

It is also surprising how many young people, who harbour desires to work on news programmes, are unaware how deep a loathing many editors have of media studies degrees. I have often heard them say they would prefer a graduate in politics or history, who has done a postgraduate media course from somewhere like City University.

Without industry contacts, getting as far as writing in for work experience is beyond many applicants. All too often they pin their hopes on traineeships, such as the highly competitive, in-house BBC news trainee schemes, without a hope of getting in.

The ethnic minority courses, established by the BBC and some ITV companies for black and Asian students to counter-

act discrimination in recruitment, are also inundated with applications.

The BBC has also been running a mentor scheme, which matches black teenagers who want careers in the media with black members of staff. Mentors and mentees have regular meetings over a nine month period, and the students are found in-house work experience.

Some manage to benefit immeasurably from the personal contacts they establish, yet even for those who did not progress, it gave them an idea of what working in television is like.

I recall one young man, desperate to be taken out filming, who found it so boring he fell asleep in front of a learned QC. Others had clearly joined the course because they weren't sure what else to do.

Vagueness is possibly the most serious handicap of all. Because most jobs in the media, unlike surgery or law, can be handled by most people, the industry attracts those who have few burning passions but think they can do the job better than those they have seen on television.

Thankfully, steps are being taken to address this. Last week I attended a careers conference aimed at sixth-form students. "Television, radio and film producers promised a potentially satisfying career if only applicants could target the area they were genuinely interested in. The mantra of the evening was: make contacts, find work experience, have ideas, get discovered."

One danger of getting in by any means necessary, however, is that you may stay in a junior position for years. A former BBC colleague has realised this. She recently walked out of a coveted staff post after many years. She found her working day so unbearable that by the end she could hardly bring herself to walk into Broadcasting House. Her job title, "production assistant", may have sounded impressive — and she did meet the odd politician — but in reality it amounted to ten hours of booking studios and radio cars, answering the queries of irate freelancers, and showing editors how the photocopier worked. She was attracted to the media because she thought she was creative.

HENRY BONSU

The author was a journalist on the Today programme from 1993 to 1996. He is now a freelance broadcaster and writer.



A lot of universities jumped on the bandwagon when they saw how popular media studies courses were becoming

Courses are no 'open sesame'

It is easy to see why media studies is so popular with students. It has an attraction and an immediacy with which "heavier" academic subjects cannot compete. Universities and colleges have responded by providing more graduate places and churning out media wannabes at an increasing rate. But once qualified, where do they all go?

Duncan Adams, who graduated two years ago from Bournemouth University, is now a press officer for Sussex Police. He claims that the marketplace is swamped with media graduates. "It was such a fight for jobs when I got out," he says, "and in some cases having a media degree was a disadvantage. For one low-paid, quite menial job there were 780 applicants." Two years on he thinks that only about half the students of his year have found media-related jobs: one works on *EastEnders*, another does promotional work for BBC videos.

Yet Bournemouth University offers some of the most established media courses. "A lot of universities jumped on the bandwagon when they saw how popular the subject was," says Paul Luman, course leader for the television and video production degree at Bournemouth. "We never said we offered specialist technical degrees. We aim to produce all-rounders."

Part of the trouble is that many students who take media degrees see them as an easy way into professions

such as journalism — which is not what they are intended to be. Shy teenage girls are particularly vulnerable to such notions. They say they want to work in newspapers, but are unlikely to be accepted on to a regional newspaper training scheme where a strong personality is as important as A-level results. They think that what they can learn in the classroom will make up for their lack of confidence. It does not work like that.

Then there are the overconfident graduates who think they know it all. Students talk about going to television companies on work experience and being told to unlearn everything they had picked up at university. The technology changes so quickly and the skills required are so specialised that companies prefer to train someone to suit their own systems.

Nigel Henbest, director of the television production company Pioneer Productions, says that what his company looks for most in prospective employees is "hands-on" experience. It might be helpful to have a university education, but it would not really matter what the degree subject was.

Other employers look for someone who can offer them a specialism, such as a science degree, whom they can then train in media techniques.

To be fair, few academics claim that

their courses are "open sesame" to a future in the media. They suggest that the problem is partly generational: anyone older than their mid-40s will probably not have had the option of studying media, and there is a tendency among such professionals to be sniffy about media education.

There are signs, though, that the mood is changing. One consistent complaint has been that media studies courses are too wide-ranging, so the newer ones have become more specialised. The better educational institutions have always courted experts to give guest lectures or to run some of their courses. The liaison works both ways — prejudice will be broken down only if the industry knows what students are learning, and if teaching staff have the respect of the industry.

If you believe the optimism on campus, we are on the edge of a new technological age. The consequences of deregulation, the advent of digital television and Website publishing are just some of the areas that could open up whole new fields of employment requiring people with transferable, multimedia skills.

My advice is that anyone considering the university option should talk to recent graduates and ask the staff exactly what they aim to prepare students for.

SANDY PARKER

The author is a lecturer in media studies

PAPER ROUND

Brian MacArthur



A smoking gun of a photograph

It's such a nice picture. Especially for a Saturday morning. It features two of Britain's best-known models, Kate Moss and Jade Jagger. They are famous, beautiful, dressed in striking colours, their hair tied up in equally colourful buns made of fishnet, and at £500 each the dresses cost a lot more than the average working person's weekly wage. It's a photograph to dwell on. It could easily spark off a conversation over breakfast.

There is only one problem. As this picture appeared on the front page of *The Times* two Saturdays ago (now suitably censored for *Paper Round*), both Moss and Jagger were smoking cigarettes — and only one executive, a woman smoker, realised the potential danger involved in publishing it.

The rest found no difficulty. It was the day of the Assisi disaster, but when the paper went to press there were no useable pictures showing the extent of the damage — and the verdict on the Giotto was that they were better used alongside the story inside where the earthquake was reported in detail. So Saturday editor Nicholas Wapshott opted for some Saturday fun — two models enjoying a chat, a giggle and a jag as they relaxed at the end of London Fashion Week.

It is easy to mount a defence of the photograph, and only a few years ago it would have provoked no serious comment. Photographs show facts, however disturbing, and readers who see them can draw their own conclusions. One conclusion would be that young women still smoke, despite all the propaganda against smoking, and that it was a striking and colourful picture. Neither did *The Times* endorse their habit: it simply showed that it was one in which they indulged.

Another conclusion, however, would be that the two women were flagrantly abusing their positions as role models, that our photographer should not even have taken the picture, that the picture editor should not have offered it for use — and that if he did the night editors should have spiked it.

Our readers overwhelmingly endorsed the second conclusion, and the Editor received one of his angriest postbags for years. The photograph legitimised and glorified a dangerous activity. It made smoking seem "cool", the "in" thing to do (that from a 14-year-old). As role models, Moss and Jagger were likely to be imitated by other young



Kate and Jade: smokeless

girls, a complaint from several parents.

It was a photograph that would lead some younger readers into "disease and death", said one correspondent. "An unwilling photograph of secretive lovers is far more acceptable than the willing photograph of cigarette-smoking young ladies," wrote another.

The editors who selected the picture offended against no article of the Press Complaints Commission's code of practice. Yet unwittingly and innocently, by appearing to condone smoking (which is, it ought to be said, still a legal activity), they offended the sensitivities, the view of what newspapers should or should not publish, of many readers. As our postbag demonstrated, we live in politically correct times. Editors beware. America here we come.

At *The Times* the lesson has gone home. Peter Stothard, the Editor, says he would think very carefully before using a picture of women smoking cigarettes with such prominence again. It would have to pass a very high hurdle of justification. So was he being politically correct? "Only to the extent that editors need to be reminded every so often that some photographs are potentially harmful. Ambassadors and city chairmen try to influence me: why shouldn't readers, too, when they have a good case to make?"

The offending picture was the subject of last Saturday's caption-a-picture competition. Among the entries were:

"I don't think smoking is any more dangerous than living near Sellafield, do you?"

"I earn more doing these cigarette adverts than I do modelling."

"... and the X-ray showed this huge shadow."

Some readers clearly took the real message from the picture.

Raymond Snoddy on the resilience of well known brands in the face of 'own-label' price-cutting

Brand-names bounce back

The long, bitter battle between "own-label" supermarket brands and leading premium brands is about to enter a new phase. Dr Stephan Buck, an executive director of Taylor Nelson AGB, is a top-market researcher who believes that own-label brands may be about to hit their high-water mark, and that premium brands, despite the price difference, may be bouncing back.

With the help of detailed research from a 10,000-strong panel that logs electronically what groceries they buy every week, Dr Buck believes that "leading premium brands continue to display great strength and resilience."

The own-label market share has almost doubled in the past 20 years to take over 40 per cent of the packaged grocery market. But an analysis of 29 major product areas, for which data is available over 20 years, shows that in 19 of them the brand leader in the 1970s remains the brand leader in the 1990s.

Coca-Cola may have lost out in some supermarkets to the launch of own-label colas but overall, Dr Buck argues, Coca-Cola's market share has hardly diminished. The reason, he believes, is that top brands such as Coca-Cola have other outlets, such as small independent stores, garages and vending machines.

In the packaged-detergent market many of the major multiples, led by Sainsbury's, had produced their own sub-

brands, such as Sainsbury's Novon, but the major manufacturers such as Procter & Gamble and Unilever still dominate their markets partly, Dr Buck notes, through television advertising.

Even in a market where price-cutting has been at its most intense — such as in baked beans — the premium products have not suffered the collapse in market share that many expected. "Even at the height of the price war, Heinz maintained its market share in value terms, and now that the worse excesses of the war are over, the Heinz share has reached its highest level for years," Dr Buck says.

The researcher, with his colleague Judith Passingham, believes that the growth of own-label products, which are liked and respected by consumers, was boosted by the major multiples winning market share from independent retailers, and major retailers increasing their share

of own-label products in line with Sainsbury's. Sainsbury's own-label products have retained a share of around 56 per cent for a number of years.

The researchers note, however, that a comparison of two 12-week periods in 1997 against 1996 shows a decline of three percentage points in Sainsbury's own-label share from 56 per cent to 53 per cent.

"If Sainsbury's and other major retailers regard own-label shares at 55 per cent as being the optimal level, and if major multiples control 90 per cent of the packaged grocery market in the future, it suggests that own-label shares should find a ceiling at around 50 per cent of all packaged grocery expenditure," Dr Buck argues.

The big supermarket chains also seem less inclined to get involved in price-cutting campaigns with own-label products which can harm retailers as much as premium-brand manufacturers. In fact, as own-label products look like reaching their peak, Dr Buck and Ms Passingham believe a new relationship could be established between the protagonists.

"Over the next few years the expansion of types of products and services sold at supermarkets, and, in the longer term, possible changes in the basic technology of shopping, could begin to create a new and less confrontational equilibrium between the retailers and their packaged goods suppliers," the researchers argue.

BEATING THE PREMIUM

AVERAGE PRICES IN TESCO STORES

	Premium brand	Tesco own-label	Value*
Instant coffee	185p	135p	57p
Baked beans	35p	23p	10p
Cola	65p	30p	13p
Washing-up liquid	185p	82p	20p
Muesli	202p	158p	132p
Yoghurt	184p	161p	95p
Average index	100	69	35

* Tesco's 100p price band Source: AGB-Research



Stephan Buck: "optimal level for own-label is 50 per cent"

THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

NEWS

Hague slaps down Tory 'dinosaurs'

William Hague exerted his new authority over the Conservative Party by slapping down two Tory "dinosaurs" over controversial remarks at conference fringe meetings.

Hours after his endorsement as party leader, he demonstrated a determination to impose discipline by disowning Lord Tebbit for speaking against a multicultural society and criticising Alan Clark for saying that the only way to deal with the IRA was to kill 600 people in one night. Pages 1, 8, 9

Human cells used to grow body parts

A method of growing body tissue, known as tissue engineering, will soon make it possible to produce an almost complete range of body spare parts for transplants. Scientists have already produced skin grafts, but are now using the method to grow bone, cartilage and ligament. Page 1

Oxbridge anger

Attacking the Government's higher education spending review, Oxford's vice-chancellor said cutting support for the Oxford and Cambridge college system would "destroy their competitive position". Page 1

Talks overshadowed

The first full-scale peace negotiations involving Unionists, nationalists, loyalists and republicans opened, overshadowed by the resignation of Bill Burke, the Irish Foreign Minister. Page 2

Murder charge

British teenager Louise Woodward murdered a baby in a fit of rage while unhappy with her life as a nanny, an American jury was told. Page 3

Saxon skeletons

An archaeologist removed the final traces of Saxon soil from a Saxon warrior and warhorse who journeyed across the landscape 1,500 years ago. Page 4

Arts report

A report into the Arts Council of England and the Royal Opera House has cleared the two of an "inappropriate closeness", according to a summary released by the Arts Council. Page 4

Computer talk

The Princess Royal found an ally when she urged schools not to allow computers to dominate education — Bill Gates. Page 5

The Queen dons socks to visit mosque

The Queen had donned navy blue socks — looking suspiciously like British Airways-issue — when she entered the echoing vastness of the Faisal Mosque in Islamabad to view one of the many architectural masterpieces in the Pakistani city. Its main prayer hall can accommodate 10,000 people and her visit was slotted into a gap between prayers. Page 1

Bagshot awaits

Prince Edward's plan to move in next door met a mixed response from those already living in Bagshot. Page 6

16-day siege

Separatist militiamen from all over America have rallied to the side of a 51-year-old widow who has been barricaded inside a farmhouse for 16 days. Page 10

Back to Earth

Back at Kennedy Space Centre after more than four months on board Mir, Michael Foale was unable to conceal the profound effect on the crew of the June's accident. Page 11

French strike

French rail workers mounted autumn's first big strike to bolster demands for a shorter working week before an employment conference that will present the Government with its toughest challenge so far. Page 12

Russian plea

Red Cross officials called on Russia's new wealthy to help an estimated 31 million people living below the poverty line. Page 12

White House attack

The chairman of the Senate committee investigating alleged political fundraising abuses exploded in frustration at the White House for "flooding and concealing" over controversial video tapes. Page 13



The Spice Girls in Granada to launch *Spiceworld*, sales of which may top 18 million. The album's UK release date is November 3

Economy: The headline rate of inflation rose in September, but the Government's target rate dipped slightly. Annual headline inflation reached 3.6 per cent from 3.5 in August. The underlying rate fell to 2.7 (2.8 in August). Page 25

Payoff: Iraq's Occidental Petroleum's chairman, will be paid \$95 million (£57 million) to sign a new contract. Page 25

Sweet news: Thorntons, the chocolate shop chain, will create 820 jobs in the next four years, opening 148 more shops. Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 5.6 points to close at 5305.6. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 100.2 to 100.5 after a rise from \$1.6138 to \$1.6235 and from DM2.8421 to DM2.8479. Page 28

Football: Les Ferdinand, the Tottenham Hotspur striker, has withdrawn from England's squad for the World Cup qualifying match against Italy with a stomach muscle strain. Page 46

Golf: Phil Mickelson, the American Ryder Cup player, has been seeded fifth for the Toyota World Match Play Championship, three places lower than he expected. Page 46

Cricket: Austin Robertson, the agent for Shane Warne, has assured the three English counties vying for the Australian leg spinner that he will sign for one of them. Page 42

Rugby: My Emma, who had two group one successes including a Yorkshire Oaks victory, has been retired. Page 43

Adapted only: Choreographer David Bintley explains why his new work for Birmingham Royal Ballet, *Edward II*, is not suitable viewing for children. Page 16

Hiding star: Five years ago dancer Shi Ning Lin left China to take up a Royal Ballet School scholarship. Now, at 23, he is a regular soloist with the company. Page 16

Hans on the rise: Glyndebourne's touring arm opens its autumn season with the popular success of the summer, Jérôme Savary's risqué staging of Rossini's *Le Comte Ory*. Page 16Home win: Actor Gary Oldman talks about his debut as a film director on *Ni by Night*, a semi-autobiographical tale of drink, drugs and violence. Page 17

Facing despair: Kiefer Sutherland tells Sandra Parsons why he felt he had to sleep with his wife's sister, Jacqueline du Pré. Page 14

Great gambler: The final extract from Anthony Seldon's book reveals why John Major put his premiership on the line. Page 15

Nigella Lawson: Family feminism and Cold War confusion. Page 15

Asking Auntie: The BBC is 75 next week: Raymond Studdy has some awkward questions. Page 22

Degree of doubt: Media studies appear glamorous, but do students use the degree to avoid local newspaper training? Page 23

Stately rose: Michael Wade's home is Country House of the Year, but a conservation group opposes his restoration plans. Page 37

Blair, with his film-star charisma and iron will, could make even Margaret Thatcher jealous — *Moskovsky Komsomolets*. Blair promised to back Russia, above all in the preparation of the G8 summit which he will chair — *Kommersant-Daily*. Blair's appearance in a popular radio soap opera was a brilliant coup by his image-makers — *Enidanya*.

George Urban, Cold War commentator and adviser; Philip Turner, sculptor; Andrew Keir, actor. Page 21

Need for Tory-fresh start: right to drive; rethink on school French; art and censorship; Morton and Red Cross; cancer trials. Page 19

TOMORROW IN THE TIMES

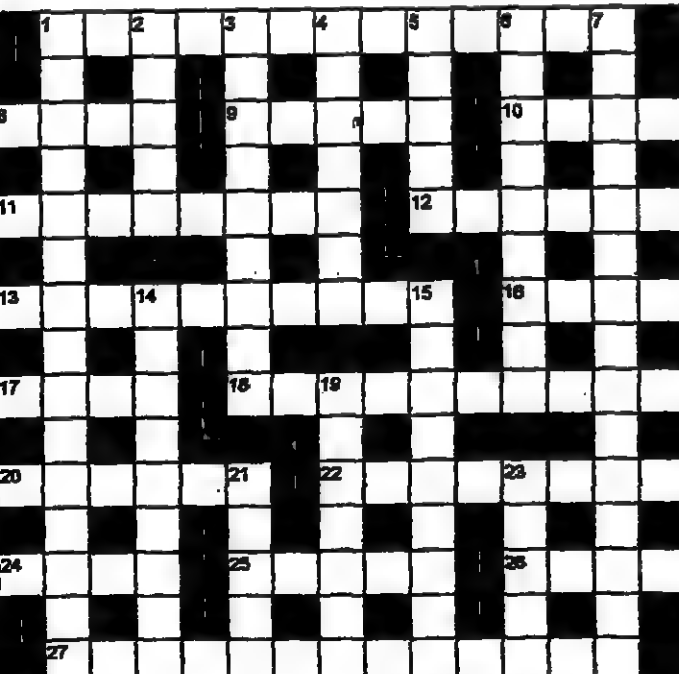
FILMS

An elaborate practical joke? Geoff Brown on *The Game*, starring Michael Douglas

BOOKS

Claire Bloom reviews Joan Sutherland's story; Hardy Amies considers what makes men stylish

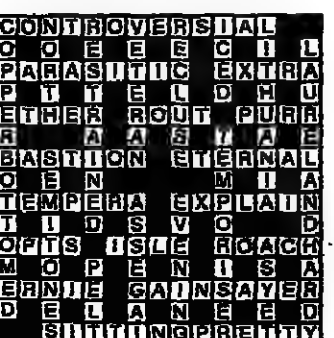
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,605



ACROSS

- Representing old times, produce such theatrical gear? (6,7).
- New Suffolk author? (4).
- It's a fantasy, doctor, directing Mac West? (5).
- Long time in parliament? (4).
- Underground worker adopting wrong headgear supplier? (6).
- Swindle securing Queen's pearls, perhaps? (6).
- Self-obsessed chap grabbing PEP money? (10).
- Unemployed, one gets regular payment, none the less? (4).
- What's had about good omen? (4).
- Fruit presented by father of Venus's hero? (10).
- Poet setting merry hearts dancing? (6).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,604



- Very tired policeman is unlikely to take action on it (4-4).
- Assault involving long section of sword? (4).
- A prickly lot, critics, primarily seen before start of play? (5).
- Encourage removal of politicians, say, wanting power? (4).
- Disastrous bar I found on backward island? (13).

DOWN

- Taking risks on the field when opponents are shooting? (7, A, A).
- Insurgent displaying some more belligerence? (5).
- Regulation guns bagging one? (9).
- Bank, one specialising in vaults? (7).
- Elite British force surrounding second island? (5).
- Being governed by one's ancestors leads to stress? (9).
- Gen. Tara, and Irene'll get involved in it? (7, 8).
- Nice act I'm having modified for the movies? (9).
- In this plant, see the state of vehicles? (9).
- Travellers served with one company, initially (but only initially)? (7).
- Repeated main points about European farming scheme? (5).
- Obscure book needed promotional material? (5).

Times Two Crossword, page 46

Latest Road and Weather conditions

See Weather 44 regions 0230 444 410
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THE TIMES

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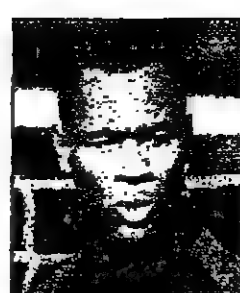
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TODAY



ECONOMICS
EMU adds kick
to the cocktail,
says Janet Bush
PAGE 29



HOMES
Stately row over
conserving
a Georgian house
PAGE 37



SPORT
Ferdinand halted
on England's
road to Rome
PAGE 42-48

**TELEVISION
AND
RADIO**
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8 1997

Swift seeks to avoid railway battle

By CARL MORTSHED

JOHN SWIFT, the Rail Regulator, yesterday promised that plans to introduce competition on the railways in 1999 would not lead to a pitched battle between rival operators.

The Office of the Rail Regulator is publishing a consultation document, seeking views from the rail industry and consumers, on its plans to allow access to competing operators on routes where franchises currently enjoy a monopoly. The plan is to allow rival train services access to network routes from April 1999, with full competition from 2002.

The changes would mean operators being invited to nominate routes on which they required protection against competitors, while other routes would receive no protection. New entrants on protected routes would be allowed access to up to 20 per cent of available revenue.

Mr Swift said that competition would bring pressure to introduce new products and services and to cut costs. "Passengers could reasonably expect to see the emergence of more attractive fare packages, higher frequencies of service on popular routes and new direct services," he said.

Mr Swift said his role

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was to ensure that competition developed in the public interest. He sought to quell fears that competition would lead to the predatory practices adopted by rival bus operators, which have led to repeated intervention by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. "Before relaxing the constraints on competition, I would need to be satisfied that adequate controls were available to prevent the emergence of 'rail wars'-type competition, and to ensure that network benefits were maintained," he said.

New train operators will be expected to adhere to the same licence conditions as existing franchisees, providing integrated ticketing and timetabling with the rest of the network.

An ORR spokesman said the finances of new train operators would be scrutinised. He said: "We would have to satisfy ourselves of the status of the operator. One of the duties of the regulator is to see what the financial impact of competition will be on the franchisee."

Mr Swift said the original decision to guard franchisees from competition was due to uncertainty in 1994 as to whether firms would bid for franchises facing free competition.



Sweet talk: Roger Paffard, left, Thorntons' chief executive, and Jonathan Fellows, finance director, celebrating yesterday's announcement of better profits

Inflation casts doubt on Labour spending plans

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

A SURPRISE rise in the rate of inflation in September will increase costs to the social security budget next year and jeopardise the Government's spending plans, analysts said yesterday.

Headline inflation climbed from 3.5 per cent in August to 3.6 per cent — the highest level for two years. The September inflation figures are used by the Government to calculate annual increases in social security benefit levels, including state pensions and the jobseeker's allowance.

As a result, the total benefits

bill will increase by £2 billion in 1998-99 — an estimated £500 million more than the Government had previously anticipated. The Treasury confirmed yesterday that it would use cash from the £5 billion contingency reserve to help make up the shortfall.

But Chris Giles, programme co-ordinator at the Institute of Fiscal Studies, said that with nearly half of next year's fund already allocated in the July Budget for extra public spending, the Government will face a tough task sticking to its spending targets. "The Government is in deep trouble with next year's contingency reserve," Mr Giles said. "There are

worries over the number of health authority trusts winning a deficit and the public pay round is still to come."

Economists gave warning that the latest rise in inflation could also have an adverse effect on wage inflation, as September is a key reference point for many companies. Higher than expected private sector deals would only increase the pressure on the Government to make improved public sector settlements when the pay round is concluded in February.

Leading benefits, such as the state pension, are tied to the headline rate of inflation. The Department of Social Security said a couple's state

pension will consequently rise from £99.80 to £103.40 from next April. Child Benefit will increase to £11.45 per week for the first child and £9.30 per week for the second child.

But means-tested benefits, such as the jobseeker's allowance and income support, will increase by only 2.4 per cent — compared with 2.6 per cent last year — as the Government uses a different measure of inflation, one that excludes some housing costs to calculate the annual rise.

Economists said that the September increase in mortgage rates, after August's base rate rise, was the main reason for higher inflation. But falls in fuel and motor costs helped

the Government's target measure of inflation, excluding mortgage interest payments, to fall from 2.8 per cent to 2.7 per cent in September. Clothing and footwear prices also fell from 1.6 per cent to 0.5 per cent while household goods inflation stood at 0.9 per cent. Economists said that the fall in underlying inflation provided further reason for the Bank of England not to raise rates at the end of this month's monetary meeting, which begins today.

Separate data from the Confederation of British Industry showed financial service sector growth slowing to its lowest level since March 1996 in the last three months.

Thorntons to open 148 shops in four years

By PAUL DURMAN

THORNTONS, the chocolate shops chain, is to create 820 jobs over the next four years, opening 148 more shops and lifting the output of its Derbyshire factory.

The new initiatives will add £40 million to the cost of the "revolution" that Thorntons has embarked upon since Roger Paffard became chief executive last year. The company has already spent £18 million of a £51 million plan to revamp and resite its 300 existing shops.

Thorntons has switched its focus from manufacturing to retailing. Mr Paffard once doubted whether Thorntons should continue in manufacturing but a review has persuaded him the company is the only possible maker of 70 per cent of its product lines. So £35 million is being spent to improve its Thorton Park site.

Thorntons is planning additional shops because it believes it can operate profitably from 90 smaller towns that it had previously ruled out, and from the Republic of Ireland, from factory shops and from a second outlet in the largest shopping centres. The increased investment will create 520 retail jobs and another 300 in manufacturing.

The company reported annual pre-tax profits of £11.5 million, 31.5 per cent up on last year's underlying total. Sales were 19 per cent ahead, at £109.2 million, while earnings climbed by more than half, to 13.32p a share. A final dividend of 4.2p a share, due November 28, will increase the total by 10.4 per cent, to 5.85p.

Like-for-like sales from Thornton-owned shops rose 12.9 per cent, driven by substantial increases from the refitted and resited shops.

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BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	6305.8	(+5.6)
Yield	3.07%	
FTSE All share	2453.45	(+3.20)
Nikkei	17511.19	(+313.59)
Dow Jones	8145.89	(+45.67)
S&P Composite	979.82	(+6.83)

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	10 1/2%	(10 1/2%)
Yield	6.34%	(6.29%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Life long gilt future (Dec)	120 1/2	(120 1/2)

STERLING		
New York	1.4206	(1.4156)
London	1.4206	(1.4156)
DM	2.8474	(2.8423)
FF	8.5721	(8.5559)
Yen	121.58	(121.58)
£ Index	100.5	(100.3)

US \$ BOLLAR		
London	1.7837	(1.7780)
DM	8.8328	(8.8095)
FF	1.4448	(1.4478)
Yen	121.58	(121.58)
£ Index	104.8	(105.1)

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Dec)	\$20.70	(\$20.50)
London close	\$21.65	(\$22.35)

* denotes midday trading price

Challenge

JJB Sports will open its 200th store next month and hopes for a chain of 700 branches across Britain. David Whelan, chairman, hopes to see the chain grow to 500 in town and 200 out of town.

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Windfalls

About 170,000 British policyholders of the Australian Mutual Provident Society will get free shares worth about £3,000 on average when the insurer and fund manager floats in Australia next year.

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Occidental chief to be paid \$95m

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

RAY IRANI, chairman of Occidental Petroleum, will be paid \$95 million (£57 million) to rip up his old contract and sign a new one. The cash payment is believed to be among the biggest of its kind in US corporate history.

Occidental is rewriting Mr Irani's contract because its lavish provisions were threatening the oil group's long-term financial health. The payoff will reduce Occidental's quarterly earnings by 28 per cent, according to documents filed at the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The group, which said it was advised by independent lawyers, thought it more prudent to take the one-off charge now rather than to continue Mr Irani's rolling seven-year contract, renewed on a daily basis.

Mr Irani, 62, was being paid an annual salary of \$1.9 million and a guaranteed

bonus of not less than 60 per cent of the salary. Since he started the job in 1990, he has also been paid at least \$1.9 million in restricted stock per year and an annual grant of stock options worth more than \$2 million. If Occidental was taken over, Mr Irani would have received seven annual salaries plus seven years of stock and options.

The new contract is modest in comparison. Mr Irani will be paid \$12 million annually over a fixed five-year term and he will no longer get a guaranteed minimum of stocks and options. Instead, his various bonuses will, for the first time, be directly related to performance. The takeover payoff clause has been scrapped and so has a lifetime retirement benefit.

Under his stewardship, Occidental's returns on capital were half of those of similarly ranked companies.

Strong gets new role at WorldCom

LIAM STRONG, who stepped down as chief executive of Sears in April with a pay-off of £465,000, has waived the right to further substantial payments by accepting a job with WorldCom, the US telecoms group bidding for MCI (Jon Ashworth writes).

Mr Strong was due to receive more money next year under the terms of his severance package — provided he did not take a new job. He is in line for substantial performance-related payments in his new role as chief executive of WorldCom International.

Korn/Ferry International, the executive search firm, is thought to have handled the appointment of Mr Strong, who will work alongside Colin Williams, chairman of WorldCom International, which has 1,500 employees worldwide.

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III-fitting shoes, page 29

Chris Evans bids for Talk Radio

By CHRIS AYRES

CHRIS EVANS, the radio and television presenter, has made a bid for Talk Radio, the struggling national radio station.

Mr Evans has been in discussions with the loss-making station through his media company, Ginger Productions, for three months. Talk Radio is guaranteed a licence to broadcast a national digital radio service from next year.

Ginger could be forced to pay up to £90 million for Talk Radio, which broadcasts on medium wave only and has an estimated 2.3 million listeners at peak times. Talk Radio's largest shareholder is CLT, one of the world's biggest media groups, which also holds a stake in Channel 5 and Atlantic 252. Another large stake is held by MVI, a media conferencing business which has interests in Teletext. MVI indicated that it wanted to sell

its shares in Talk Radio earlier this year.

At the weekend Mr Evans signed a ten-week contract to present his own breakfast show for Virgin Radio, the rival station, for an estimated £1.3 million. Ginger also receives about £13 million from Channel Four to produce *TFI Friday*, a show presented by Mr Evans.

John Revell, head of Ginger's radio division and a co-presenter of Mr Evans's breakfast show — known to listeners as "Johnny Boy" — said: "We are some way down the road with the negotiations and are still having lots of conversations with them. We see a real opportunity with the station because it is guaranteed to get a digital licence. At the moment, it's not a particularly successful business. We would like to see it move towards sport and comedy."



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BT deal gives schools cheaper access to Net

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT



The Net will cost schools £1 a pupil

SCHOOLS are to get all-day access to the Internet for less than £1 per pupil per year after Ofcom, the telecoms regulator, forced BT to reduce its charges.

The new agreement gives each of the country's 32,000 schools ten hours of daily access for £790 per year on high-speed lines with no connection charges. A comparable charge for business use would be about £2,000. On standard phone lines BT will offer access for £445 per year plus a £100 connection charge.

Having rented a line from BT, schools can link up to the Internet provider of their choice. Yesterday's deal follows months of wrangling between Ofcom and BT. Initially BT offered three hours' access for £790 for digital access through ISDN2 lines, which are speedier and allow more interaction than standard phone lines.

Dor Crickshank, the regulator, said he hoped that competitive pressure could lower BT's prices further. Cable companies are offering schools a £600-per-year Internet deal. BT can lower its prices to compete to a floor of £631. As the

dominant supplier, BT's prices are held higher than its smaller rivals so that they may compete effectively.

It is hoped that the deal will trigger a big switch by schools on to the Internet. At present only 6,000 schools have links, with 4,000 of those using cable companies.

BT said: "These innovative prices should help to transform the level of take-up of information and communications technology in schools throughout the UK."

Mr Crickshank said: "This agreement delivers schools the affordable, predictable prices that

they have been asking for." The protracted talks between the regulator and the industry mean that the cheaper prices will not take effect until the spring term next year. Last month — the start of the academic year — had been the planned starting date.

Ofcom's education taskforce will now look at other areas where cheap access may be granted. These will include libraries, further education colleges and Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Net's mixed bag, page 29

AMP float windfall worth £3,000

By George Sivell

AROUND 170,000 British policyholders of the Australian Mutual Provident Society will get free shares worth about £3,000 on average when Australia's largest insurer and fund manager floats on the Australian and New Zealand stock exchanges next year.

The shares are due to be allocated in January and the listing is planned to take effect in the middle of 1998, valuing the mutual insurer at A\$9.4 billion or £4.2 billion. The formal name will change to AMP Limited on flotation and 1.07 billion free shares will be given to the membership of 1.8 million. The shares were given a current value by AMP of A\$8.81 to A\$10.37 each.

AMP owns Pearl insurance company in Britain and recently failed to take over Scottish Amicable. AMP says that it will continue to pursue its acquisition strategy and that if there are any developments before the listing takes effect members will be informed. Pearl policyholders will not get a payout because Pearl was already stock market-listed when it was taken over by AMP in 1989.

A roadshow is planned for London on November 3 and in Glasgow on November 5, ahead of the deadline for the receipt of votes on November 18 and a general meeting in Sydney on November 20.

Policyholders are expected to receive at least 100 shares under a complex formula relating to the size and lifespan of their investments, with some receiving upwards of 1,845 shares for a life insurance policy over 30 years.

Documents issued by AMP also showed the float should prove profitable for George Trumbull, its American-born managing director, who he stands to receive up to one million free AMP shares between listing and the end of 2000 when his contract expires.

Mr Trumbull, who joined AMP in 1994 when the 149-year-old group was struggling with difficult investment markets at home and abroad, is already believed to be the highest-paid businessman in Australia with a 1996 salary reported to be about A\$3 million (£1.33 million).

AMP has more than A\$100 billion of funds under management. Mr Trumbull said at the very least AMP would achieve steady profits in 1997, citing very healthy equity markets in Australia and the United States in particular.



Helen Liddell, centre, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, meeting two victims of pensions mis-selling, Stella Gardner, left, and Christine Culbert

Minister meets pension victims

By Gavin Lumsden

AFTER five months of haranguing the pension industry for its slow progress in clearing up its mis-selling scandal, Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, yesterday met two victims who have finally been compensated.

Christine Culbert, 49, and Stella Gardner, 52, told the minister of their years of frustration and anxiety in waiting for settlement from Guardian Financial Services and Abbey Life, from whom they wrongly bought personal pensions in the late 1980s. Ms

Culbert, a school administrative assistant in London, was persuaded not to join her local authority scheme. Ms Gardner, a home care officer in Poole, Dorset, left a scheme on the advice from an Abbey representative. Both have been reinstated after action by the GMB union.

Mrs Liddell said: "This is the human face of pensions mis-selling. The statistics tell a grim tale, but cannot give a true picture of just how much distress is caused. However, at last, it is heartening to meet people who have taken their complaints forward and —

finally — received the redress they deserve."

However, new Treasury figures showed that 11 pension firms have still to resolve more than a quarter of their priority cases. These include Friends Provident, which was fined £450,000 by the Personal Investment Authority last week, and Gai Life and Sun Life of Canada. Only five had settled more than half their caseload. A total of 500,000 priority cases have been identified, with another potential 1.5 million non-priority cases still to be dealt with. Mrs Liddell said that she would announce soon what sanction she would take against firms that failed to speed up their reviews.

The Association of British Insurers said that pension companies had resolved 64 per cent of the most urgent cases, a sharp increase on last month. Companies have to settle 90 per cent of these cases to avoid fines by the PIA.

However, the PIA criticised the ABI for making too much of the number of people excluded from the review. Even so, ABI data suggested Prudential, Royal & Sun Alliance and Albany Life may have missed the PIA deadline.

Nortel to tap into high-tech

By Raymond Snoddy
Media Editor

NORTHERN TELECOM (Nortel), the Canadian telecommunications manufacturing group will today give details of what it claims is a technological breakthrough that will allow Internet data to travel along conventional domestic electricity wires.

The company says that the technology "has the potential to stimulate major growth in Internet use, and will change the future for electricity utilities". It has been successfully trialled and is ready for the mass market.

It is believed that the system will be able to deliver services at ten times the speed of most PC modems. Increasingly, however, the Internet is likely to carry sound, with full motion video also on the way, and it is not clear whether the Nortel system can carry sound or video signals. If it can, the system would make the electricity wire a more central competitor for existing telecommunications companies.

The obvious advantage of such a system is that electricity companies have an existing wire into virtually every home in the country.

A number of power companies, including Energis, have been working with Nortel on field trials in a number of UK homes over the past year.

Net's mixed bag, page 29

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Eyecare slumps by a third in first half

EYECARE PRODUCTS, the spectacle frame maker that has lost its chief executive and more than half its value in the past year, has reported interim pre-tax profits down a third at £1.5 million. Eyecare, which owns the Foster Grant sunglasses brand, expects a stronger second half after "very encouraging" sales over the past three months.

The company said it achieved modest growth in sales in the six months to June 30 but reported that turnover from L'AMY, its French business, was reduced by the strength of sterling. This cut first-half sales by 7 per cent to £32.8 million. Eyecare is not paying an interim dividend. It paid 0.57p a share last year. Martin Franklin, chairman, said new initiatives were starting to pay dividends and he expects this momentum to be continued next year.

Pentex reserves rise

PENTEX, the oil and gas group with interests in UK on-shore exploration, said that its reserves had increased five-fold through its 40 per cent interest in Sibir Energy, an AIM-listed oil exploration company with assets in Siberia. Pentex suffered a pre-tax loss of £36 million in the year to June 30, due to an exceptional write-off of £43 million after tax changes in November's Budget forced it to sell the Melrose Partnership, removing the largest element of Pentex's profitability. The dividend for the year is 0.2p per share.

UK water prices up 4%

BUSINESS is picking up the bill for inefficiency in the water industry, a study of world water prices has shown after Britain recorded the second-highest percentage rise. National Utility Services said water prices in the UK rose by an average 4 per cent in the year to July, ranking the country as the fifth most expensive for water. NUS said the main causes of the price rise were repeated droughts and leakage. Andrew Johns, NUS director, said repairs "will inevitably mean even higher prices for businesses" who are unable to access alternative supplies.

Construction complains

THE CONSTRUCTION Confederation has joined business objections to the Government's plans to introduce a statutory right of interest on overdue accounts. It said the plans were "impracticable" and that new legislation, planned for next year, would be unworkable. "It is not interest that small companies require, but the means to acquire a quick, fair, enforceable and cheap method of obtaining judgment for outstanding sums," the confederation said in a submission to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Active funds ahead

ACTIVELY managed pension funds again outperformed those tracking an index last year, according to analysis from the specialist WM Company. On average, the active managers have beaten the index-tracker in three out of the past five years. The margin is so slim, however, that it is roughly equal to the charges imposed by investment managers. In 1996, index funds returned an average 16.6 per cent, the FTSE All-Share index 16.7 per cent and the average actively managed fund 16.8 per cent. Commentary, page 27

BA hopeful on alliance

BRITISH AIRWAYS said it remained optimistic about its planned alliance with American Airlines yesterday, despite indications from Brussels that a decision on the tie-up was likely to be pushed back to next year. Karol van Miert, the European Competition Commissioner, who is assessing the deal with UK and US regulators, said the airlines had delayed the inquiry by questioning the competence of his office. The inquiry has dragged on for 15 months, but Mr Van Miert was hopeful of substantial progress in the coming weeks.

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Greece Dr	478	USA \$	1.751
Hong Kong \$	10.40		
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Sears shareholders should not begrudge Liam Strong his flashy new job, since it will save them having to add to the £465,000 compensation they have already paid him for dispensing with his services.

With several months' notice, his elevation to the lofty title of chief executive of WorldCom International was confirmed on the day that bankers JP Morgan finally sent out their sales memorandum on the Sears shoe businesses, a document that is not likely to reflect well on Mr Strong's achievements.

The four chains to go under the hammer are far from thriving. Shoes were the major problem facing Sears when Mr Strong moved into the company and JP Morgan's tone will effectively demonstrate that this remained the case at the end of his reign. Now the company has conceded defeat and is resigned to costs of at least £150 million for quitting the sector.

Pessimists fear that the price could be considerably higher, for the rumours are that trading, particularly in the Dolcis business, is dire. In recent years Dolcis has changed its image more often than a super-model and the result has been confusion and alienation amongst customers and escalating losses.

Having closed 150 stores in the chain, what is left of the Shoe

Express operation may find more takers. The highest interest, however, is likely to be in Shoe City, the out-of-town chain that was a Strong innovation. But it is just as likely that the successful bidder will only be after its sites rather than its bright ideas.

The smallest of the businesses, the vaguely upmarket Cable & Co, has been eyed up by Nine West, the ambitious United States company, but is also said to have attracted the attentions of Mohamed Al Fayed. Al Fayed already owns the Kurt Geiger shoe business and had talked of floating it until a certain disillusionment with his sale of House of Fraser rather dented the prospects. After his foray into publishing with Punch, the owner of Harrods may feel that shoes offer better returns.

But the market is tough: yesterday's inflation figures showed that clothing and footwear prices were actually lower in August than they were a year earlier, another factor likely to scale down the cheques to Sears.

Such doubts continue to dog

the Sears share price, an eloquent reflection of the City's view of the management. Mr Strong has left such indignities behind him. He faces the happier prospect of living with a share price full of optimism, if little more. WorldCom apparently wants Mr Strong for his marketing skills. Sustaining this stratospheric level will put those to the test.

Rail rivals leave passengers behind

Rail competition was shelved to save the Tory Government money. There was little interest in the City or industry for taking on rail operating franchises. Potential bidders were more likely to be attracted by a protected monopoly, so that was put into the bulky package of concessions made to

COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

ensure that the railways were privatised before the election.

If the Tories had insisted on competition on the rails, there would have been little competition for franchises and subsidies would have mushroomed. Such stark realities lay behind the statesmanlike words of John Swift, the politically acute rail regulator, when he put off new competition — at least until 1999.

Mr Swift is now putting on another carefully judged exercise to review the issue. Would anyone like competition in 1999, even 2002, or should the whole idea be tactfully dropped?

In theory, even new Labour

wants to convert as many franchises as possible back to British Rail when they expire or when laggards run out of cash. Anything that makes life harder should make more train operators give up. There is no

reason to think, however, that shunting rail back into the public sector is the policy at Number 10. Tony Blair could easily have scuppered the sale of Railtrack, kingpin of the system. He chose not to, leaving his opposition spokesmen to flail around in frustration. Mr Blair has not changed his mind, even if John Prescott occasionally dusts down Clare Short's plan to re-route subsidies through Railtrack and somehow reassert control.

If the Labour Government wants rail to stay in the private sector then it should be wary of anything that boosts subsidies, even such a "good thing" as competition. Train operators, by contrast, may now be more sympathetic, especially to the gentlemanly, all-holds-barred regime envisaged by Mr Swift. Competition can be bargained against extending the shorter

franchises. Operators have tried the argument that they cannot invest in new trains without more security, even though separate train-owning companies were set up to avoid just this dilemma. Bargaining longer contract security for competition would be more convincing, even if competition is likely to flourish only on paper.

Rivals neck to neck on pensions track

Fans and sceptics of index-tracking can find comfort in the latest analysis of pension fund performance from the WM Company. Just as the trackers gain ground, active managers are improving their performance. They won by a short head in 1996, making three wins in five years. But adding years when the trackers edged ahead, outperformance by active managers scarcely covered fees.

Passive management of pension funds' UK equity portfolios produced a combined annual return of 14.2 per cent over the past ten years, while stock-

pickers managed just 13.9 per cent. This is not the paradox it seems. Active management has two elements. One is picking the right markets, geographically or between shares and bonds. The other is picking the right stocks in those markets.

Few fund managers are as good at one as the other. On average, the WM figures suggest, they contribute more in top-down strategy than in bottom-up stock-picking. Instead of polarising between active and passive, pension funds are more likely in future to pick bits of each. This is as well. Index-trackers deserve to gain some ground, but are ultimately parasitical. If they became too successful, they would destroy the efficient stock market processes on which they depend.

Helping hand

PARTNERSHIP is a fashionable concept. Never slow to spot a trend, it seems that Saatchi & Saatchi now wants to become partners with its customers, sharing in the development of brands rather than being mere admen. This would, of course, involve taking a share of the profits the brands generate. They might think of themselves as consultants. Good to see that the spirit of Maurice and Charles still lives on at the firm.

JJB Sports plans vast expansion as profits soar 97%

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

JJB Sports is planning a vigorous expansion that will see it open its 200th store next month and could lead to a chain of 700 branches across the UK.

David Whelan, chairman of the sports clothing and equipment retailer, said he hoped to see the chain grow to 500 in-town and 200 out-of-town shops by expanding at a rate of 50 per year. The group has opened 32 stores so far this year, taking its total to 186 and store number 200 is due to open in Warrington at the end of November.

The company delivered better than expected half-year figures yesterday, with pre-tax profits leaping 97 per cent to £14.23 million. Its shares responded by rising 5p to 504p as analysts increased their full-year forecasts. Robert Miller at Dresdner Kleinwort

Benson shifted his forecast from £32 million to £34 million. Other analysts moved from below £30 million to about £33 million. Mr Miller said he was particularly impressed by the sales growth at JJB's superstores.

The company expects to have £11 million to £12 million cash at the end of this year and will increase capital expenditure next year as it enlarges its warehousing. But Mr Whelan, a former professional footballer for Blackburn Rovers whose family owns 54 per cent of the group, said: "If we get too much cash we may buy back some shares."

Mr Whelan was also confident about the ability of JJB Sports to increase sales of women's sportswear. New women's collections brought out by Reebok, Ellesse and Adidas could mean women's

wear growing to about 10 per cent of sales in the next year, he said. "It was hardly anything before; these women's collections have only come out in the last six months," he said. Clothing for children aged between two and ten years is also selling strongly, he said.

Like-for-like sales in the first half were 18 per cent ahead. In the second half the rate has slowed somewhat to 8 per cent, but the company said this was because of difficult comparisons with last year, which saw particularly strong trade on the back of Euro 96. The company will pay a sharply higher interim dividend of 2.25p (1.5p) on December 9 on the back of earnings per share of 10.55p (5.03p).

Times, page 28
City Diary, page 29

Pearson settles for \$25m

PEARSON, the media group, is paying the American Booksellers Association \$25 million (£15 million) to settle claims against Penguin Books (Oliver August writes).

Earlier this year Pearson took a £100 million charge to cover costs arising from the legal dispute over its US books subsidiary and payment of unauthorised discounts to booksellers. Avin Mark Domnitz, ABA director,

said: "The symbolic value of a payment being made by a publisher to independent booksellers cannot be lost on the industry."

The ABA said it ended a dispute over favourable terms "that only some Penguin customers received". Jerry Jacobs, an ABA lawyer, said: "This is by far the largest antitrust discrimination settlement ever in the over-60-year history of the antitrust discrimination laws."

Ikea takes Premier stake

IKEA, the Swedish furniture and property group, has taken a 29.9 per cent stake in Premier Land, the property investment company (Fraser Nelson writes).

Ikea is selling four of its Amsterdam office blocks to Premier Land for £6.93 million in shares and a 17 per cent share of rental income from the properties. Premier also said it was putting Union Group, its worst-per-

forming property portfolio, into administration after suffering a £3.45 million loss. It will retain three areas of business: the four Ikea offices, Amsterdam's Magna Plaza shopping centre and the Aviemore Centre in Scotland.

Ikea's Premier stake is now just below the 30 per cent threshold that would trigger a takeover bid for the whole company.

Cobham up 20% at half time

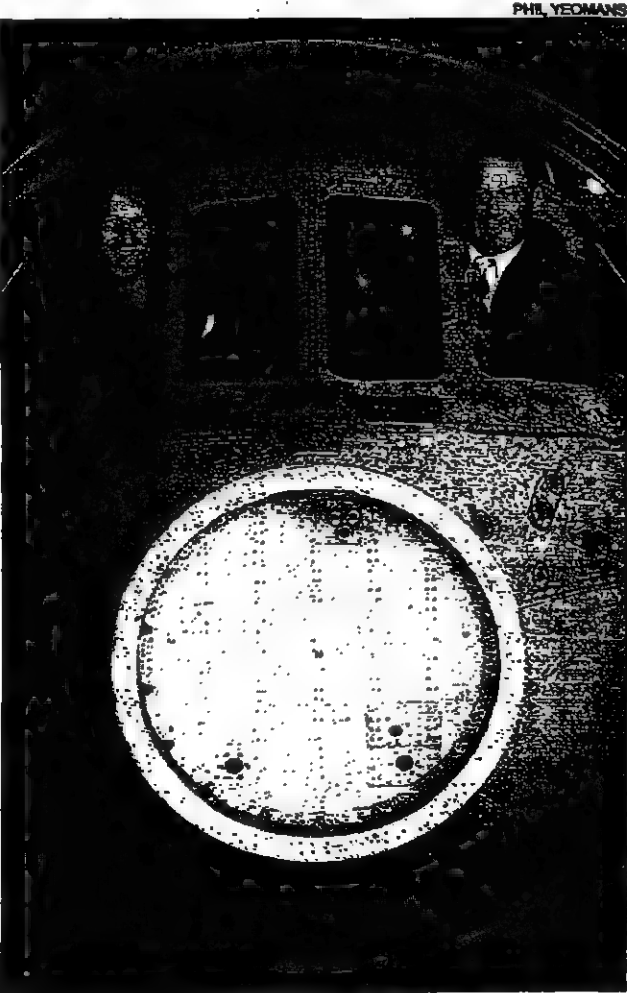
By ADAM JONES

COBHAM, the aerospace components and services supplier, lifted interim profits 20 per cent on the back of buoyant demand for new civil aircraft.

In the first half of this year, pre-tax profits were £24.9 million. Turnover was £151.1 million, up from £132 million in the first half of 1996.

The group's current order book is worth more than £600 million. This does not include £40 million of orders at the aerospace and marine division of MLC Holdings, which Cobham bought for £37 million last month. Analysts are expecting the company to dispose of at least two of the non-core MLC businesses acquired in the deal, with a decision likely this year.

Gordon Page, chief executive, said new contracts from MLC could amount to £100 million. Small purchases are expected this year. The group, where Giles Irwin is finance director, will pay an interim dividend of 4.05p (3.5p) a share on December 12, from adjusted earnings of 18p (15.2p).



Giles Irwin, left, and Gordon Page in an RAF Nimrod

Mixed fortunes for News Corp in 'difficult year'

By RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

RUPERT MURDOCH, chairman of The News Corporation, has admitted to shareholders that the international media group has just had "a difficult year".

Mr Murdoch told investors at the annual meeting in Adelaide how the company had "raced ahead with partners into great ventures" but not all had worked out as expected, including one of the most ambitious, the satellite service for North America.

"It was decided halfway into that venture that discretion was the better part of valour and that perhaps we were

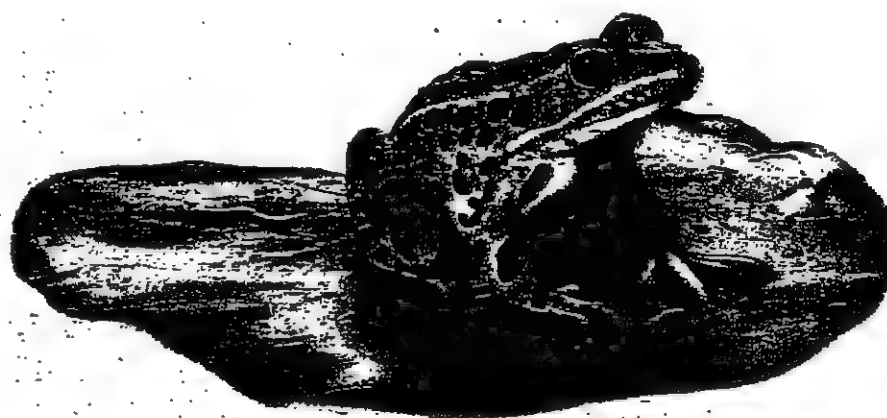
already five years too late in starting," said Mr Murdoch, who explained that News Corp had instead negotiated participation in another partnership, Primestar, the satellite service owned by leading cable companies.

Mr Murdoch said that in the UK, Sky News had become profitable, although its parent company, British Sky Broadcasting, would have a "flatish" year or two because of the cost of moving to digital satellite. News International, the subsidiary of News Corp that owns The Times, owns 40 per cent of BSkyB.

News Corp had also had a great deal of difficulty in its HarperCollins books division, but management had been changed and assets were written down, which "we felt were wrongly represented in our balance sheets". This year, Mr Murdoch said, HarperCollins would have revenues of well over \$700 million and is expected to be "moderately profitable".

Core businesses of film, TV and newspapers were all doing well. Newspapers in Australia were up 30 per cent in the first quarter and the UK titles were 20 per cent ahead.

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EMU adds rate rise kick to the cocktail

Until the single currency became a live issue on the British political scene, the meeting of the Bank of England monetary policy committee today and tomorrow was destined to be a non-event. The pause in raising rates that the Bank had indicated would surely persist until its November meeting, soon before its next inflation report.

However, the debate now raging about the Government's intention towards European economic and monetary union means that this week's meeting is a closer call. As soon as the *Financial Times* reported that the Cabinet was warning to EMU, and may even signal its intention to join the euro as soon as possible after 1999, long bond yields and sterling slid. Shares soared into new territory.

This has not only meant a burst of asset price inflation, but also a

clear loosening of monetary policy at a time when the Bank is concerned about overheating. The in-house view of the Bank now has to be tempered by the influence of outside appointees to the MPC — although it is yet to be seen whether they turn out to be rebels — but it is a good bet that Eddie George's men may now be itching to raise rates.

And they are probably right. Sterling and long-term interest rates are likely to be kept firmly on a gentle downward path because the EMU issue will not go away.

Everybody — except arguably Robin Cook — sees an advantage in playing the EMU card little and often. Gordon Brown probably

genuinely wants to see Britain join a single currency and, in the meantime, hitting at such forbidden desires is a useful tool in bringing the pound down to a more competitive level.

Tony Blair and Peter Mandelson, masters of the great political moment, want to make a success of the British presidency of the European Union next year when the crucial decisions about who joins and at what rates are taken. It was never going to be easy to make a splash of the presidency while being hostile to their European colleagues. So, at least for the next nine months, and in spite of opinion polls saying the British public is hostile to handing eco-

nomics policy to Frankfurt, Downing Street is likely to make cooing noises to its European partners. It doesn't really matter, for the narrow purposes of the Bank's current deliberations, whether the Government is thinking about

late 1999 or 2000 or even 2002 (and it probably doesn't know itself). The perception is now firmly entrenched in the financial markets that something is afoot, and they will trade accordingly.

This, apart from all other considerations about the longevity of the economic upswing, building society windfalls and the rest, puts pressure on the Bank to push up short-term rates. Convergence plays will ensure that the pound and long-term yields continue to fall, if only relatively gently if the spin doctors manage to fine-tune EMU speculation to ember, rather than blaze, proportions. However, the convergence, in itself, will be seen to make Britain's entry into

EMU more feasible and so reinforce the convergence trend.

On any eventual entry into the single currency, the Bank would have to swap its probably still-high short rates for the European Central Bank's probably low rates, and there is a real risk of a big boost to British domestic demand that could not be counteracted by tighter money. Albert Edwards, of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, calls this the "euro bubble".

All the more reason, then, for the Bank to bear down against any inflationary pressures now. The MPC may not move this week but, in spite of some fears of an incipient economic slowdown in

some quarters of the City, the argument for a move in November seems compelling. This is not likely to worry the Chancellor. Convergence suits him if he wants Britain in EMU sooner rather than later, and higher short-term rates are a good trade for lower long-term ones because this will simultaneously bear down on consumers but help exporters.

All the leaking from one of the leakiest governments in living memory has probably had the desired effect, whether it has been changing the direction of the financial markets or smoothing the way for Britain's EU presidency. However, the corollary of this masterly news management (if it has been as deliberate as one suspects) is that mortgage rates will be higher than they would have been without a drop of EMU in the economic cocktail.

Net's mixed bag of selling opportunities

Technophobes will be delighted that instead of bringing about the demise of the humble book, the Internet has sparked a trade war between rival online booksellers.

The market for the printed word has become the first to establish itself on the Internet in such a dramatic way, with Barnes & Noble, the world's largest bookseller, and Microsoft, the software giant, teaming up yesterday to produce an aggressive online sales strategy.

Many other markets are set to follow, with music, groceries, cars and even property now being traded on the Internet in the United States. Graham Wallace, chief executive of Cable & Wireless Communications, the cable and telecommunications giant, said last week that he expected consumers to double their annual spending on the Internet to £50 billion within the next twelve months.

Richard Hyman of Verdict, the market research company, says: "There can never before have been a new distribution channel to have threatened to change the way we shop on the scale of the Internet. If the resources being invested by retailers is any yardstick, the companies who will be most affected certainly think that this is a medium they cannot afford to ignore."

Trade on the Internet will be mainly based on the use of credit cards, with consumers browsing through product information online before placing their order, along with their card details, on a company's web site. The product will then be delivered through the post. Internet experts say that this kind of trade allows consumers to make much more informed decisions, without having to deal with inept or aggressive sales assistants. It also gives consumers more time to do what they want, rather than having to waste time shopping for mundane products.

A survey by Verdict, which is published today, shows that three quarters of Internet shoppers enjoy buying goods online, while 60 per cent say that it is more convenient than conventional shopping. Nearly half think that it is more cost-effective, while just over 40 per cent believe that it is easier to find what they want on the Internet than on the high street.

The online sales strategy of Barnes & Noble could provide a blueprint for many other retailers. The company's ex-

clusive agreement with Microsoft allows it to provide book-selling services on its most frequently visited Web sites. These will include MSNBC, the news service, Expedia, the travel site, and Microsoft Investor, the personal finance site. Although details of the agreement have not been released yet, the two companies will share profits from the joint venture, which will immediately open up a market of 2.1 million consumers to Barnes & Noble.

The move is part of Barnes & Noble's global expansion strategy, which will also see it launch a multimillion-pound venture in the UK book market, bringing it into direct competition with more established players such as Dillons, Waterstone's and WH Smith.

But in spite of the hype surrounding the agreement, many will see Barnes & Noble's online plans as rather belated. The company has already lost a huge volume of sales to Amazon.com, its upstart Internet rival.

Amazon, which now modestly describes itself as "The Earth's Biggest Bookstore" — was the first company to establish a successful Internet book-selling site. The traditional book trade, not known for its love of modern technology, at first dismissed the service as a gimmick.

Amazon now offers readers one and a half million titles in print, and another one million out of print. Customers who visit its site can read selected passages from books, look at reviews written by other customers or write their own

criticisms and recommendations. To buy a book, customers give their credit card details and the book is sent through the post.

Amazon currently offers books at discounts of up to 40 per cent below its high-street rivals. The company has also managed to stage a worldwide publicity coup by offering customers the chance to contribute to a short story written online by John Updike, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist.

The way consumers pay their bills could also be fundamentally changed by the Internet. Microsoft is reportedly setting up a joint service with First Data Corporation, the credit card services group, to take over the bill-paying operations of American utilities. It is estimated that ten million Americans receive three bills a month at a cost to the sender of 50 cents each.

Microsoft believes it can have this cost by sending bills electronically. After customers have received their electronic bills, they will then have the option of questioning or cancelling the amount charged to them, before the money is automatically taken out of their account.

Although companies in the telecoms, software and electronics sectors are desperate to make the future of Internet commerce look as bright as possible, its success will depend ultimately on how willing consumers are to give their credit card details to Internet sites.

This problem was highlighted at last week's CWC conference when only a handful of delegates admitted that they would be willing to use their

cards online. In contrast, nearly all said they would gladly hand over their credit card to a waiter, or use it to order theatre tickets over the telephone.

It was an uneasy moment in a conference designed to alert consumers to the supposedly mouth-watering opportunities brought by Internet commerce. After all, most of the delegates were experts in information technology. Without their trust, there is little hope for the rest of the market.

The display of no confidence has failed to dent the enthusiasm of Graham Wallace, who is convinced that consumers will eventually overcome their fears of online fraud. "We will be able to guarantee great levels of security over the Internet," he says. "The irony is that using your credit card over the phone is incredibly insecure, and you certainly can't get any more insecure than putting a letter in a paper envelope."

He went on: "I do not think it's as big a leap of faith as some people make it out to be. At the moment we are seeing the tip of the iceberg, with Internet shopping ready to explode. I expect to see levels of trade doubling every year in the way we have seen so far."

Although the British online market is still far less advanced than in the US, many companies are starting to offer American-style Internet services. J Sainsbury became the first supermarket group to launch an Internet shopping service in 1995 with Wine Direct, and the company currently estimates that about 20 per cent of its customers are interested in some form of remote shopping.

However, there is not yet any solid evidence to prove that consumers regard such schemes as anything other than gimmicks. Research by Verdict suggests that such scepticism is perhaps justified. It shows that only 0.07 per cent of current UK retail spending is on the Internet. This figure is expected to rise to 1 per cent by 2001, and 8 per cent by 2010.

Richard Hyman says: "When it comes to touching, viewing, hearing, smelling and trying on, electronic shopping is at a significant disadvantage. Picture quality is poor and cannot provide the visual detail to make buying on clothing or furnishings fully discernible. In this area the Internet is some way from even being able to match today's mail-order catalogues."



The life of Liam: clockwise, from top left — as a food retailer, first with Reckitt & Colman; marketing with British Airways; in charge of the ill-fated shoe subsidiaries as the chief executive of Sears; and at home with wife Jackie



Ill-fitting shoes are forgotten as Strong lands on his feet

Famous shameful exits. Peter Rawlins bows out from the Stock Exchange after the scrapping of Taurus, the electronic trading system. Gerald Ratner watches his jewellery empire fall apart after making rude remarks about cut-glass sherry decanters.

Liam Strong finally gives up on Selfridges after five years' trying to squeeze his left foot into the wrong shoe.

So who clinches the top international job at WorldCom, the US company at the heart of the biggest takeover bid in history? When Strong quit Sears in April, his ears ringing from myriad insults, headhunters rated his chances of landing a decent UK post at less than zero. One suggested that he try the Middle East. Another said anywhere would do — as long as it was not Britain.

To the intense annoyance of his detractors, Strong, 52, has managed to do both, keeping his feet in the UK, but answering to an American employer. Not only that, but his timing is immaculate, coming days after WorldCom threw BT's expansion plans into disarray with its \$30 billion bid for MCI, the US

long-distance telephone group. WorldCom insists that the timing is "complete coincidence". Those who have observed Strong over the years have come to recognise him for what he is — a corporate chameleon, ready to change colour to fit whatever surroundings most suit him. That his biochemistry went spectacularly amiss at Sears was just one of those things. Strong was resplendent in his new colours yesterday, his tail and feet clad in the Union Flag, his head and torso adorned in the Stars and Stripes. He spent the morning introducing himself to WorldCom's London employees, before jetting off to New York on the first leg of a global tour.

WorldCom was being characteristically "American" about the whole thing, refusing to say how Strong came to be hired, and declining to comment on the size of his pay package. In line with US practice, he is likely to command a comparatively modest basic salary, topped up by a heavy incentive element. Strong left Sears with a £465,000 payoff, and would have been in line for more money had he not succeeded in landing a new job within ten months.

Headhunters were appointed months ago to find someone to head WorldCom's international division — a surprisingly big operation, with 1,500 employees, half of them in London, and annual sales approaching \$1 billion. There is a sizeable office in Hong Kong. The company will not say which headhunters were used, but Rae Sedel of Russell Reynolds, the UK's leading telecoms recruitment specialist, was not involved. The finger points at Korn/Ferry, which does a lot of work for WorldCom. Strong's marketing background, rather than his retail skills, would have tipped the scales when it came to the shortlist.

WorldCom was swift to peddle this line, saying Strong's years with global players such as Reckitt & Colman and BA made for a good fit. He had a feel for a network industry operating as a multinational organisation, and understood the value of a global brand. Perhaps he does, but a man

who has in turn sold soap powder, mustard, airline seats, and shoes cannot really claim to know anything about telecoms. An intriguing link is provided by Sir Colin Marshall, chief executive of BA at the time when Strong was BA marketing director. Sir Colin is chairman of Incape, of which Strong is a non-executive director. He is also deputy chairman of BT.

Strong was little known on the UK media stage before taking the BA appointment in 1988. Born in Enniskillen in Northern Ireland, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he read philosophy, he did three years with Procter & Gamble, working with brands such as Daz and Fairy toilet soap. He moved to Reckitt & Colman, staying for 17 years, before switching to BA, where mistrustful old timers nicknamed him "The Mustard Man". He became chief executive of Sears in 1992, saying that the jobs were not really all that different.

For a military historian, Strong proved spectacularly inept at plotting his Sears campaigns, selling the Olympus Sport retail chain to Philip Green for half the net asset value, then unloading 380 shoe shops to Facia, run by Stephen Hinchliffe. It subsequently transpired that Hinchliffe had not paid anything for the businesses. Sears remained liable for many of the store leases and employee wages.

Strong will be hoping for a happier spell at WorldCom. Just don't mention shoes.

Without peer

TOM CHANDOS, one of our most experienced investment bankers specialising in the media, is on his way at the end of this month after disagreeing with his employer. Never a wise thing to do, even if his dispute with John Bots, founder and chairman of Bots & Co, the niche finance house, is an entirely amicable one about where the business goes.

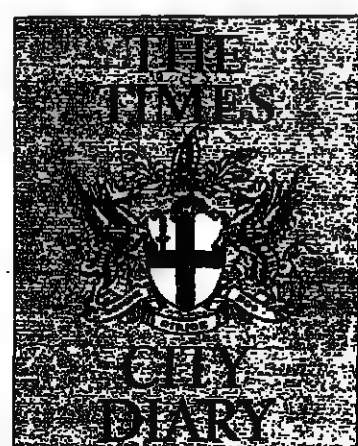
But it has meant Chandos has been approached by various big City banks and is also considering setting

up on his own account. He spent nearly 20 years at Kleinwort Benson before switching to Bots, which is part-owned by Allen & Co, the American media investment bank, in 1993.

Chandos inherited a viscountcy in 1980 but uses the title only when he is trying, as a peer who has taken the Labour whip, to have the House of Lords overhauled and his hereditary rights abolished. He was adviser to Lord Hollick, another Labour peer, and MAI in the union with United News & Media but came to prominence a year ago by quitting as a non-executive of Chrysalis in protest at chairman Chris Wright's tardiness in appointing a chief executive.

He has a couple of directorships — "something to keep me out of mischief even if it isn't something to keep my bank manager happy" — but, asked of his long-term plans, he says: "I genuinely don't know."

● FOR a man with a reputation as a ditherer, Liam Strong is fond of martial metaphors. (I blame Sun Tzu, the Chinese military strategist whose *The Art of War* became a sort of New Age business bible a while back. And that chap who wrote about Attila the Hun's business secrets). His hero is Napoleon, and he can give chapter and verse on the emperor's tactics.



He has expressed a longing to lead an army in battle, and has quoted General Ulysses S. Grant: "First find your enemy, then move in on him and hit him hard and then keep hitting him." I wonder if Strong, during his stay at Sears, ever came across the Mongol tactic of feigned retreat. You rush up to the enemy waving your arms and making a huge song and dance. Then you run away again.

Not the ticket

THE tariff on parking meters in most of the City has been increased this week from £4 for two hours to £5, to adjust, says the Corporation of London, for inflation since it was last raised in 1989. It seems it would be

better if we all used public transport. It is generally a waste of time to try to counter political correctness with a few facts, but here goes.

The sort of people who regularly drive and park in the City are not going to be put off by an extra £2 a stay. And most rush-hour traffic congestion, as anyone who drives across London or other big cities knows, is in the outside residential areas, and consists of people making short, necessary journeys — school runs, trips to the station. Never mind. If the Corporation really wants to discourage cars, why not build a ring of concrete and plastic around the Square Mile, and allow cars to enter in single file? What do you mean, it didn't work?

● IT IS now almost two years since the brothers Maurice and Charles departed to set up their own agency, and Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide has finally accepted that the name no longer fits. The business, now being demerged from sister agency Bates by the parent holding company Cordiant, accepts that time has moved on, and a new name is needed to reflect the changes that have taken place. But they are keeping the Saatchi bit. Instead they are dropping the word "advertising".

Own goal

AS AN ex-footballer, there are certain mistakes you would not expect David Whelan, the chairman of IJB Sports

and former Blackburn Rovers defender, to make. For example, putting small, replica football pitches in his company's larger branches to encourage children to demand even more replica shirts from their parents. The result, not surprisingly, was replica football hooliganism. "I got a bit rough," Mr Whelan said, with apparent surprise. "My goodness, some of those children can kick a ball." The football pitches are therefore no more, though the tamer game of basketball can still be played at IJB. And the mini-hooligans are on their way to the England-Italy game.



David Whelan found in-store soccer games on the rough side



"I wish I had as many lives as Liam Strong"

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Modest gains at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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Blow for Kohl as unemployment rises to record

FROM DEBORAH COLCUTT IN BONN

GERMANY'S unemployment rate set another postwar record in September with no improvement in sight before next spring, according to the Federal Labour Office.

Figures released yesterday, showing seasonally adjusted unemployment had risen by 34,000 from August to nearly 4.5 million, came as a bitter blow to Chancellor Helmut Kohl at the start of a tough year of campaigning ahead of the general elections next autumn. Officials also see little hope of a change in the trend of climbing unemployment in Germany, which has increased almost every month for the past year.

Klaus Lever, Labour Office vice-president, said: "The overall figure certainly won't improve before spring next year." He added that the forecast average for 1997 had been revised up by 100,000 to 4.4 million. However, Herr Lever

said the Labour Office did not expect to have to tap Bonn for more funding to support the country's unemployed.

Economists say additional welfare costs and a subsequent £2.7 billion loss in tax revenue could hamper Bonn's chances of qualifying for economic and monetary union (EMU) in 1999.

Herr Kohl is determined that Germany will meet the Maastricht treaty's budget deficit target of 3 per cent of gross domestic product to join the first stage of a single currency union but the economic recovery promised by the Government is slow in coming.

"We are seeing structural problems in eastern Germany persisting," Nick Stamenkovic, Frankfurt analyst, said.

While unemployment in western Germany rose by 7,000 to 3.05 million, 26,000

more people were without work in the former East Germany, where a number of government work schemes have been scrapped and many companies, which were artificially kept going by the Communists, closed down.

"It is extremely worrying that this downward trend doesn't stop," Herr Lever said. "The gap between east and west is growing."

However economists pointed out that a slight improvement in the jobless rate in western Germany was almost exclusively because of an export boom, linked to the fall in value of the mark.

The opposition Social Democrats (SPD) immediately reminded the Government of its pledge to halve unemployment by the year 2000.

"The promise turned out to be a cartoon bubble," said Ottmar Schreiner, the SPD's deputy parliamentary leader.

Bloomsbury boosted by best-sellers

BY FRASER NELSON

BEST-SELLERS like Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Will Self's *The Great Apes* helped Bloomsbury Publishing to stem its losses in the first half, but the results still failed to restore City confidence in its long-term prospects.

The company's shares, which joined the market at 110p three years ago, dropped 1p, to a near-low of 82½p yesterday, as the company returned a pre-tax loss of £367,000 for the six months to June 30, against a £379,000 loss last time.

The company said there were signs that the UK book-buying market is beginning to recover, and it also welcomed the advance of Waterstone's and Books Etc whose stock mix was suited to Bloomsbury's titles. But it would not comment on its collaboration with Microsoft over an electronic quotations dictionary because the deal is commercially sensitive.

Total sales for the half-year improved to £4.76 million (£4.4 million). In spite of a 4.27p loss per share (4.55p loss), a maintained interim dividend of 0.7p is declared.



Nigel Newton, chairman of Bloomsbury, sees signs of a book-buying recovery in the UK

Maunder's profits and sales build

BY GEORGE SIVELL

JOHN MAUNDERS, the housebuilder, raised pre-tax profits by 38 per cent to £6.2 million in the year to June 30 on sales up 15 per cent to £77.8 million. Earnings per share rose by 38 per cent to 16.65p, out of which the total dividend for the year rose 10.5 per cent to 6.30p. The final dividend was raised by 14 per cent to 3.70p.

At the year end the book value of land stood at £47 million, enough for 2,359 plots, against 1,802 at this stage last year. Maunder's sold 1,021 houses during the year, a slight increase on the previous year.

On prospects, John Maunder, company chairman, said: "The interest rate increases have had no significant measurable effect on market conditions, with the North West and Midlands experiencing more normal levels of trading with very little inflation. The South remains buoyant, but shows some signs that price increases are starting to slow down."

Pound hits fabrics company

BY MARTIN BARROW

WALKER GREENBANK, the wallcoverings and fabrics company, achieved a 4 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, in spite of the severe adverse impact of the strength of sterling on exports and on the translation of overseas earnings.

Yesterday the company reported pre-tax profits up to £4.46 million from £4.79 million for the six months to the end of July, on sales that fell to £48.8 million from £51.45 million.

Walker Greenbank estimates that it lost export sales of about £1.6 million, while the turnover of its overseas subsidiaries was reduced by £1.8 million on translation.

Charles Wightman, chief executive, said that, although the consumer division had traded well in the first half, the commercial division had experienced tough market conditions. Earnings rose 4 per cent to 2.51p a share. The interim dividend is held at 1.3p a share and is payable on December 9. The shares fell 1p, to 58p, yesterday.

Walker Greenbank said that the trading outlook for the company continued to improve slowly. Mr Wightman said that the second half would show the benefit of recent investment.

MSB rises by 58% at half way

MSB International, the information technology contract recruitment specialist, raised pre-tax profits 58 per cent to £3.71 million in the six months to July 31 on sales up 82 per cent to £54.9 million.

Earnings per share rose 53 per cent to 12.1p out of which a half-year dividend of 3.0p has been declared, up 50 per cent on the previous year. The shares rose 5p to 47½p.

Site for Asda

Asda Property has bought the former De-Bell premises in Sutton, near London, for £125 million from Courtauld's pension fund. Asda Property said it had planning consent to redevelop the site to provide 27,000 sq ft of open retail accommodation and 87 car parking spaces.

Rentokil deal

Rentokil Initial, the business services company, has sold United Transport Tankers (UT), the road tanker distribution and tanker cleaning business, to Den Hartogh, a privately owned Dutch transport group, for £4 million.

Hogg expands

Hogg Robinson is buying the business travel operations of Kuoni Reisen in France and Italy for £300,000.

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THE TIMES DILLONS FORUM

An evening with Kevin Keegan

TIMES readers are invited to a Times/Dillons forum on Thursday October 16 in London with Kevin Keegan, the former manager of Newcastle United. Keegan, who was also an England international footballer, will be the star speaker on a panel which will include Oliver Holt, football correspondent of *The Times*. Among the topics for discussion are details of Keegan's sudden departure from Newcastle last season, his views on modern management, his return to football with Fulham and England's World Cup prospects.

The forum marks the publication of Keegan's *My Autobiography* (Little Brown £16.99) and will be held at Westminster Central Hall, Stacey's Cafe, London SW1 at 7.30pm. Admission price is £10 (concessions £7.50) and includes £2 off the price of the book. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to put questions to him.

THE TIMES/DILLONS FORUM

Please send me tickets at £10 each (£7.50 concessions) for The Times/Dillons Forum with Kevin Keegan at 7.30pm on Thursday, October 16, at Westminster Central Hall, London SW1.

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ROOM AT THE TOP

Business Assistant

£30,000

A one-off opportunity for a true Business Assistant has arisen within this international Luxury Goods company in the West End. Working for the Chief Executive, who has newly arrived from overseas, you will be responsible for the full running of her office

and decision-making at the highest level. You will need proven experience at Chief Executive or Chairman level in a blue chip company, as well as first class secretarial skills, and an impeccable standard of presentation and communication.

Committed to equal opportunities

0171 287 7788

AGENT-GENERAL for Victoria European Office, London

Applications are invited for the position of PRINCIPAL PRIVATE SECRETARY to the Agent-General, The Hon Alan Brown

The position is to act as Principal Private Secretary to the Agent-General who is head of the Victorian Government's overseas office situated in the Strand. This senior position entails the handling of both diplomatic and protocol functions, as well as full responsibility for running the Agent-General's office.

Prerequisites for the position include computer skills, audio and an ability to organise and manage clerical. Previous experience is essential.

The role also involves other duties assisting key members of staff in a small office environment.

Commanding salary £18,500 p.a.

Applications should be forwarded in writing by 21 October 1997, enclosing a CV and the name of two independent referees to:

Agent-General for Victoria, Victoria House, Melbourne Place, Strand, London, WC2R 4LG.

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PA
Excellent opportunity to be part of the Brixton Power Station Project with W1 based company. Bright, outgoing personality with good computer skills and telephone manner. Ability to work under pressure. Salary £17-19K. Call Estate Agency Ltd 0171 338 3835

MEDICAL Sales Company
NW London needs super person to help run busy office. Microsoft word. Salary £14,000. Call Anne on 0171 284 2824 or Fax CV on 0171 284 2875

REWARDING CHALLENGE FOR PAYMANAGER
Of prime general practice in Stone Devon. Salary £22,000 plus for right person. Reply to own handwriting with CV to Dr A. Hancock, 88 Stone Street, SW1X 9W.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
A vacancy exists for an experienced Secretary PA. To work for a Senior M.P. in the House of Commons. Advanced knowledge of Office Computer Operations - necessary. Experience of carrying the responsibilities of a Senior PA - essential. - Notness of experience - helpful. Whilst a sense of humour is - very important. Used to working on own. Pleasant private office - excellent facilities. Good salary and pension. Please Reply to Box No 7890

EXPERIENCED COMMERCIAL CONVEYANCING SECRETARY
£22,000
Provided by long established and well known firm of Solicitors. Must be able to work under pressure and use own initiative. Fast, accurate typing and experience of Windows essential. 9.30-5.30, 9-5, 9-5, 9-5. Non-smoking only. Good salary and pension. No Agencies. Undersecretary & Co. 10 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1RN. No Agencies.

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
Lancaster Gate
PA to the Director of Finance
We are looking for an exceptional person to provide full PA/secretarial support to our Director of Finance. The role will be a demanding one, requiring a high level of commitment, enthusiasm, self-motivation and flexibility. In addition to your secretarial responsibilities you will be providing administrative support across a range of the department's activities including pay and benefits, pension fund administration, company insurance programmes and the distribution of Charity Grants.
Organised, efficient and hardworking, you will be educated to at least A-level standard with proven PA/secretarial skills, including shorthand, at a senior level. You will have a sound knowledge of finance-related procedures based on 25 years experience in a busy finance department and will be a confident and capable communicator at every organisational level. An attractive salary and benefits package will be offered to the successful candidate.
Please write with full CV, showing your current salary level (if applicable) to:
Helen Firth, Personnel Assistant
The Football Association Ltd
16 Lancaster Gate London W2 3LW
Closing Date: Friday 17 October 1997
No Agencies

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE

London c.£27,000 p.a.

The Chief Executive of English Heritage is looking for someone to manage her very busy office and contribute to her work. English Heritage is the nation's principal body with responsibilities for the historic built environment. It has direct management of 400 historic properties, from Stonehenge to Dover Castle and Kenwood House and advises the Government on the built heritage and provides grants to owners of historic properties.

This new post requires intellectual strengths, diplomacy and the ability to juggle conflicting priorities. You will support the Chief Executive in all her work. Your duties will include organising and managing the flow of administrative and secretarial work throughout the office, commissioning and co-ordinating briefings to enable the Chief Executive to make the most of her engagements; managing her diary and relationships both internally and externally with a wide network of contacts; drafting letters, meeting notes and speeches providing a high quality of advice and support.

In return we offer a non-contributory pension, life cover, 28 days annual holiday and free entrance to all English Heritage properties.

To apply please write with your CV and a covering letter, quoting ref no R/138/97 to Lucy Riordan, Personnel Department, English Heritage, Room 409, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB. Closing date: 26th October 1997.

Unfortunately we are unable to reply individually to all applicants. If you have not heard from us within four weeks of the closing date, please accept that your application has not been successful.

English Heritage is committed to an equal opportunities policy.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

Executive Secretary to Board Director

You could make a difference

Attractive salary & benefits. Hayes, Middlesex.

At our Head Office in Hayes, we work in an open and friendly environment. We believe in bringing out the best in our people, allowing them the chance to make a difference and contribute to the success of our business.

Safeway is currently seeking an experienced board level secretary to support our Retail Director. With a confident, enthusiastic and mature manner you will be able to effectively deal with a wide range of responsibilities from planning and organising the day to day running of the Director's office to handling communication and correspondence at all levels. The successful candidate will have a tactful and diplomatic approach, be a self starter and have the ability to develop strong working relationships.

Excellent secretarial skills are required (including shorthand and audio) together with a good working knowledge of Word, Excel and Powerpoint.

If you are interested in this opportunity and feel you have the right skills and experience to meet the demands of this challenging role, in the first instance you should call our Central Recruitment Office on Freephone 0800 269718 (between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm) for an informal discussion and details on how to apply. Our recruitment team will be taking your calls until 5.00 pm on Wednesday 15th October and all written applications should reach our offices by the close of business on Friday 17th October 1997.

We are an equal opportunities employer.

SAFeway
Lightening the load

LEXECON LTD Personal Assistant to Office Manager

£23,000 per Annum Age 25+

A small firm of talented, extremely busy professionals working for high profile British and European clients has the above vacancy. Supporting the Office Manager, this is an ideal position for a well-skilled, highly organised PA with excellent communication skills. A thorough working knowledge of Microsoft Word (using both audio and copy typing) and basic experience of a Microsoft database is vital. The successful candidate will have a minimum of two years office experience.

Main areas of responsibility include full reception duties, sole responsibility for client database (including upkeep and mailshots), secretarial support to the Chairman and consultants, and general office duties. The Office Manager and the available post are the only administrative staff positions within the London office.

This position will suit a mature individual with a calm and assertive personality, a strong sense of responsibility and the capacity to work independently. Flexibility and an attention to detail are also required.

Applications in writing to:
Mrs Elizabeth Martins
Lexecon Ltd, 77/78 St Martin's Lane
London WC2N 4AA
References are essential
Closing date for applications: 17 October 1997.

PA IN KNIGHTSBRIDGE

Required for partner in busy private general practice. Speedy, efficient, computer literate and with excellent communication skills. Salary £20,000-25,000. According to experience. 0171 245 6777

Chief Executive's Assistant

International Group
Based Head Office, Brighton

Salary c£20,000

A central Brighton based opportunity close to shops, sea located in one of the town's finest buildings. This busy office is the hub of a dynamic, international I.T. human resources business, current T/O £55m. and set to double in 8 years. Age 30's and a career graduate. This high profile demands a front office personality to support the CEO's ambitious delivery plans. If your interpersonal skills, communication and secretarial abilities are of the highest level this could be the career change you have been waiting for. If this is you please forward by fax or letter your application marked strictly private and confidential to the CEO only.

support the CEO's ambitious delivery plans. If your interpersonal skills, communication and secretarial abilities are of the highest level this could be the career change you have been waiting for. If this is you please forward by fax or letter your application marked strictly private and confidential to the CEO only.

Fax: 01273 235614

EUROLINK CONSULTING

Blenheim House
56 Old Steine
Brighton BN1 1NH

Chief Executive's PA required for Peterborough based company.

High levels of IT competence, demonstrable planning and organisational skills, excellent customer service and interpersonal skills, reliability and flexibility are essential - as is a current driving licence.

Experience in a similar/challenging role would be an advantage. Salary negotiable, dependent upon skills and experience.

For information pack and application form see W.WOLF (01733) 325888 Quoting ref. PAT. Closing date Wed 22 Oct.

SECRETARY urgently required to provide full secretarial support to the Secretary-General, Executive Officer, Librarian and Accountant, typing, reception & voicemail work, producing reports and minutes of Board meetings, taking minutes, answering general mail, dealing with public enquiries, planning book orders, producing library literature and brochures, liaising with bank, dispatching payments etc. In addition, supervising maintenance staff, organising maintenance contracts with heating, tele, phone, lift companies, etc. Assisting with confidential public relations/publicity, co-ordinating organisational staff, making local reservations, booking travel arrangements. Acting as bookholder & alarm code holder, health & safety officer and first aider. Dealing with incoming and outgoing mail and courier services. Maintaining filing & central email system, and any other duties that may arise.
Skills: Minimum A-level standard, English mother tongue, recognised secretarial professional qualification, 10wpm typing, 5 years' similar director level experience, working knowledge of Arabic.
Salary: according to age & experience
Please send full CV and covering letter to Personnel Department, Al-Panor Foundation, Eagle House, 51th Street, Waltham, London SW19 3EP (no agencies) or fax 0181 944 1633.

Secretary

Land Securities is the largest quoted property investment and development group in the United Kingdom.

A vacancy exists for a full-time secretary to work in our Project Management Department within our conveniently located head office in Central London.

You must possess excellent secretarial skills and a good knowledge of Microsoft Office. You must have audio/70 wpm and be at least a second jobber.

The minimum education requirements are GCSE passes or equivalent in English Language and Mathematics and an appropriate secretarial qualification.

In return the Company offers a highly competitive salary and an excellent benefits package including a non-contributory pension scheme, profit related pay and free staff restaurant; after a qualifying period free medical insurance, subsidised gym and profit share.

If you feel you are ready to meet the challenge of this position please send a full CV stating present salary to Mrs Fiona Humphreys, Personnel Assistant, Land Securities Properties Limited, 5 Strand, London WC2N 5AF.

LAND SECURITIES

Leading the way in travel technology

senior secretary

SABRE is the world's most advanced computerised reservations system for the travel trade. As part of the AMR and American Airlines group of companies, we have an international reputation for delivering product performance and customer service which has won us consistent growth - and an even brighter future.

We now have an opportunity for an experienced, senior level Secretary to join us at our Hounslow offices, working for the Director of Finance. If you want more responsibility, new challenges and a faster pace to add spice to your career, this is your ideal chance.

This is a key role which demands highly professional communication and organisational skills, initiative and quick thinking. We are looking for first rate secretarial skills and good PC literacy. You will be using Word97 and therefore must have excellent Powerpoint and Excel skills.

In return, we offer a competitive salary package, which includes AA airline benefits and the career prospects you could only find with a truly global organisation.

To apply please send your CV, quoting your current salary and reference LW25, to Personnel Department, SABRE Europe Management Services Ltd, MD12, 23-25 Staines Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 3HE. Closing date: 22nd October 1997.



A world of travel solutions

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON Estates and Facilities Division

PA/Secretary to the Director of Estates and Facilities

The Director of Estates and Facilities is seeking to appoint a personal secretary.

The successful candidate will need to be self-motivated, capable of working independently, and possess excellent interpersonal skills. Applicants must be organised, have a good command of English and should be familiar with Microsoft Office. Experience in a responsible position with a busy professional environment is required.

Salary, including London Weighting, will be in the range £16,000 - £19,000 depending on experience and qualifications. There are 20 days holiday per annum plus extra days at Easter and Christmas/New Year.

Further particulars may be obtained from Mr T Edwards, Estates and Facilities Division, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT (Tel: 0171 361 1800). Applications for the post should be made by forwarding a CV including details of present salary and a covering letter by Friday 10th October 1997.

The office operates a non-smoking policy.

Working towards Equal Opportunities.

Unconventional PA

Our first choice candidate will be: from any background, including secretarial; exceptionally organised; charming yet determined; radiating competence; able to handle clients, stress and a varying workload; equally at home typing or keeping an office running in Partner's absence; numerous; and familiar with spreadsheets.

Your first choice employer will provide: a high level of responsibility, a challenging job, a generous pay package and a friendly and fulfilling environment.

To apply for the job, send your curriculum vitae in confidence to: Mrs Rebecca Marks, Trowers & Hamline, 6 Nels Square, Lincoln's Inn, London WC2A 3RP.

TROWERS & HAMLINE

Telephone:
0171 680 6806

Crème de la Crème

Fax:
0171 782 7586

TOP LEVEL £24,000

Join this prestigious company at board level and assist an executive team. You will organise corporate functions, co-ordinate diaries and meetings. Your excellent skills will be appreciated. 90/55 skills.

Please telephone 0171 628 9529.
Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

EXECUTIVE PA £26,000

You will offer full secretarial/administrative support to the Chairman and Chief Executive. Ability to develop a junior assistant and experience in the company secretariat would be an advantage. A friendly, professional environment with excellent company benefits.

typing 55wpm. Windows packages.
Please telephone 0171 628 9529.
Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

TEMPORARIES

- Up to £12 an hour
- A choice of bookings
- Bonuses
- Holiday pay
- Training
- Temp to perm opportunities

0171 638 9981 - City Office
0171 499 8070 - West End Office
Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

SPORTS & MEDIA £20,000

Unique opportunity for career PA to assist for young, dynamic entrepreneur. Working as his right hand person you will liaise with topical personalities and engage in your own research projects in a constantly expanding company. 50wpm.

MS Office.
Please telephone 0171 495 2321.
Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

PA / OFFICE MANAGER £22,000

Plus bonus, PPR pension, gym. Very exciting opportunity involving recruitment and supervision of secretaries, travel within the UK, plenty of organisation and project work. Suit someone who thrives on responsibility. Shorthand 70wpm. WordPerfect 5.1.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.
Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

JOBS! JOBS! JOBS!

26K - ENTRY SECRETARY

22K - SECRETARY

18K - SECRETARY

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12K - SECRETARY

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6K - SECRETARY

4K - SECRETARY

2K - SECRETARY

1K - SECRETARY

500 - SECRETARY

250 - SECRETARY

125 - SECRETARY

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IDEAL MANAGER

£20-22,000

The Sales & Marketing Director of this specialist insurance company in the City requires a Secretary to support him and his team. You must want to work for a personable, friendly and supportive Manager and for a busy, lively and affable team. Excellent typing speeds are essential (min 60wpm) as is a strong ability to organise and prioritise. You must enjoy telephone liaison with clients and want an interesting and involving role. For details of this and similar opportunities please call us now.

Committed to equal opportunities

0171 814 0800

Angela Martin

HODGE

CITY

Acquire Accountancy Experience
£18,000 + Bens

Do you have good secretarial skills? Typing 50wpm + audio and excellent WP skills. If the answer is yes then our client seeks secretaries on all levels with at least 18 months experience. Responsibilities will include diary management, travel itineraries, dealing with clients, organising meetings, post and general correspondence. In return you will be offered a rewarding and challenging career within one of the City's leading Accountancy firms.

HODGE

TEMPS

Up to £12.00 p.h.

Are you looking for exciting and varied temp bookings in the City? Our clients have opportunities for experienced secretaries who have good WP skills and packages. We also are looking for Reception and Administrative staff. To find out more, call Deirdre Rennie today.

TEL: 0171 332 0995 • FAX: 0171 332 0995

HODGE

CITY

INTERNATIONAL BANKING
£20 - £25,000 + Benefits

We currently have many opportunities for all levels of career secretaries in the prestigious world of Int'l banking. One role is for a Senior PA to assist a Chairman and requires shorthand - the others are equally as challenging and involve producing high quality presentations. Windows experience is essential - excellent benefits package offered.

TEL: 0171 332 0995 • FAX: 0171 332 0995

Junior PA rise to the challenge.

£25,000 + Bens
Are you a confident, second jobber with excellent secretarial skills? This famous bank is looking for a secretary to work alongside the PA to their dynamic HR director. Your dedication will be rewarded with excellent benefits, including £2,000 housing allowance. Each day in this department will fly past! Skills: 80/50 wpm. Hours: at least 8.00am to 6.30pm. Please call Sarah Burt on 0171 390 7000.

Crone Corkill
Personnel Recruitment

£30,000

PA with organisational flair and shorthand for charismatic MD. Crystal ball and Egon Ronal essential to plan ahead for him and client entertaining. Young, laid back environment. 0171 377 8600. SECRETARIES PLUS, the Secretarial Community.

0171-493 7001

SECRETARIES
PLUS

Opportunities for Secretaries

Multi-Skilled Secretaries

We are looking for secretaries with a minimum of two years experience for both temporary and permanent placements with an International Bank. You must be fully conversant with Words for Windows 6.0, Excel and E-mail.

For more information, please contact Philip Hawke on 0171 481 1455.

Manpower PLC,
78 - 79 Finchchurch Street,
London EC3M 4BT.

Partner Level Secretaries

We are looking for excellent secretaries with a minimum of five years experience for a number of permanent vacancies in the West End.

You must have comprehensive knowledge of MS Office, SH or Audio and experience of dealing with VIPs.

For more information please contact Louise Reid on 0171 493 8668.

Manpower PLC,
1 Harewood Place, London
W1R 9HA.

MANPOWER

PA/SECRETARY - MD To £25,000 + BONUS +++

A true right hand role assisting MD of City insurance company. You will be a strong team player and want to be involved in his diverse business and private activities. You must have minimum 4 years senior PA experience, must be a true team player and be confident. 85 wpm shorthand/70 wpm typing, audio.

SECRETARY to DIRECTOR £21,000 + BONUS +++

Excellent opportunity to work for Director & 2 members of his team in City insurance company. Involving, rewarding and busy position. You will be enthusiastic, a team player, have fast, accurate typing (60 wpm), audio, Excel and be confident.

Tel: 0171 588 3055 Fax: 0171 588 3066
MITCHELL YOUNG ASSOCIATES
Executive Secretarial Recruitment

BREAK INTO BANKING! Shorthand Secretaries - Up to £25K + Bens

Futuristic opportunities await any experienced Secretaries who are keen to join a top Merchant Bank. I can offer you immediate interviews (including evenings) if you are 24/35, have good MS Office and the capability to support a small, busy team of executives with dynamic 50/50 role. This Bank offers excellent career prospects and considerable benefits - all you have to do is call.

PASSIONATE ABOUT POWERPOINT
To £23.5K + Bens

Your mature outlook, strong character and confidence are a must to succeed in this Senior Secretarial role supporting a Financial Officer. The large multi-cultural prestigious Communications Co. with fabulous offices, paid overtime, 11-hour gym are just some of what you can expect from this Old Street based co.

MAKING YOUR MOVE AFTER YOUR 1ST JOB?
Up to £15K + Bens + BARI

Have you just completed the first year of your first job and are confident that you now have CV stability? Well now is the time to make your move! The friendly West End company is looking for a 2nd jobber with office experience and a good sense of humour to come and support their team. 50wpm and WP skills will open the door to a fabulous new opportunity! Don't delay, call today!

PAN EUROPEAN RECRUITMENT

WE KNOW HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOU!

Forget all those extravagant promises you read in the papers. What you are really interested in is constant work, good temp rates, prestigious companies, interesting assignments and Temp Controllers who are straight with you. We don't have gimmicks, we offer real benefits which turn into a healthy pay packet every week.

THIS IS WHAT WE OFFER YOU:

- A hassle free service
- Work 52 weeks per year
- Good rates of pay
- Holiday bonus
- A friendly, helpful accounts department

If you are aged 18-40, have good MS Office (or advanced WordPerfect 5.1) excellent audio and, if possible, shorthand skills - do yourself a favour, CALL THE BEST IN TOWN!

TEL: 0171 734 8484

FAX: 0171 734 8501

SECRETARY / ADMINISTRATOR

Addison Whitley Worldwide

Addison Whitley Worldwide

Addison Whitley Worldwide

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money brokers

Exc. Team Secretary - £20,000 + benefits

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City Office tel: 0171 283 4664 fax: 0171 283 4994

pride IN YOUR presentation

£22,500 + bonus

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you're needed!

£21,000

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WEST END OFFICE 0171 283 4664 0171 283 4994
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£30,000 Package

French

Interesting opportunity for a fluent French speaker to join this prestigious financial services boutique based in the West End. Responsible primarily for the MD, you will be co-ordinating frequent overseas trips & acting as his right hand in his absence. In addition, you will have sole responsibility for day-to-day office management. Would suit an experienced secretary who is happy being part of a small fast-moving office, is computer literate & has good shorthand. 100/80.

0171-831-1220

RECRUITMENT
COMPANY

Office Manager/Team Secretary

In New Media Marketing Consultancy

£17-18K

An immediate vacancy exists for a first class office manager/team secretary in a busy, young, new media marketing consultancy located in Long Lane, EC1.

Good word processing and communication skills are essential. It will be important that you have the ability to remain calm under pressure, complete detailed work accurately and be systematic in organisation.

Please apply to
Angela Nelson, Clarity Communications Ltd,
1-5 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA
or email your cv to
angie@marketing.co.uk

PA

to Business Development Director

-AMERSHAM-

Confident, organised PA with excellent telephone manner needed to proactively manage schedule, contacts and admin, support for Director of small contract consultancy company with blue-chip clients.

Must be able to work on own initiative and computer literate (MS Office). Fluency a one-to-one relationship but also key member of happy, motivated team of seven. Long term role in public, well established firm.

9 to 5 Salary

TIME SAVERS

IF YOU'RE fed up with the time it takes to pass your holiday pictures around your colleagues, use your word processor to set up an internal intranet site instead.

Just tell others your page location on the network (say, [http://www/office/word/index.htm](#)) and they can open it with an Internet browser. Hyperlinks — words and pictures you click on to take you to another page — will work if they point to files in other directories in the same way.

In Microsoft Word, create the document as usual but try to keep it simple — just a couple of typefaces and sizes. Use Insert/Picture/From File option for pictures. To make links select the text or picture, then on the Insert menu choose Hyperlink and navigate your way to the document you wish to link. Finally choose File/Save As/HTML Document. The pictures should be saved automatically in the document, but you may have to transfer them, or copies of them, to the directory where you store the intranet pages if they don't show up properly.

CHRIS WARD

Susan MacDonald looks at the benefits of being a top-level PA

How does it feel to be in such demand?

Good secretaries, especially those in top-level jobs, are beginning to call the shots. It is not that those aggressive employee-led days of the 1980s are back, but as the economy grows, so secretaries and office staff are finding they can sometimes take their pick of jobs.

Needless to say, it is the experienced, multi-skilled PA secretaries at director level who come top of the list of categories where demand has outstripped supply. The warning in some *Crème de la Crème* advertisements demonstrates this. More enticing job descriptions and a greater list of benefits show how much top secretaries are needed. Advertisements by companies offering £30,000 a year to "the right person" or "an excellent salary" and "a great opportunity for the right applicant" can now be regularly seen.

Financial benefits, such as company pensions, are being expanded into lifestyle benefits, such as health insurance, extra holidays, gym member-

ship and flexitime. Then there is mortgage assistance, sub-benefits — and even four-and-a-half day weeks.

To attract top secretaries, companies are finding that they need to rethink the salaries on offer, and salaries in some *Crème de la Crème* adverts are not stated but referred to as "negotiable".

The autumn salary survey of Reed Employment Services, published this week, states that some organisations which need to take on good secretaries are having to revise an initial offer upwards, sometimes by several thousand pounds, to attract multi-skilled staff. This is particularly true of companies in the City and West End, where the highest salaries in the UK are offered.

Across the board, the survey says, office and secretarial staff salaries are rising only slightly above the level of inflation. But this is enough to

make it even harder for smaller companies to take on top-quality secretaries.

It is one thing for companies to manage to find the perfect secretary; it is another to keep them. And so, even near-obsolete phrases such as "offering security through permanent positions" and "long-term planning and training to keep secretaries" are again in use by employers.

Given the demand for top office and secretarial staff, it is not surprising that organisations have vacancies — however, Reed's survey shows that a surprisingly high 42 per cent of the 587 employers of secretaries across the UK who were questioned had vacancies for permanent staff. This percentage was even higher in the Thames Valley, the City and the West End of London.

Nineteen per cent of employers said it was the skills

shortage at the top level that was causing them problems, in comparison with just 3 per cent who said this when the last Reed salary survey was published six months ago.

Overwhelmingly, it is IT skills that are needed more than others. An employer's idea of a perfect PA/secretary, according to the survey, is one who will have skills in presentation packages (such as PowerPoint), spreadsheets (typically Excel), advanced word processing skills (especially Word 6 or Word 7) — and excellent communication and business skills.

Shorthand is still high on the list of skills required. Fifteen per cent of employers found shortages there, as against 3 per cent six months ago. Team secretaries, who juggle the demands of more than one manager, were also found to be in short supply by 15 per cent of employers.

The need for secretaries who can speak a foreign language is finally taking off. Ten per cent of employers found a shortage in this area, up by 1 per cent on six months ago.



James Reed: "It is crucial to learn good IT skills if you want to be successful"

James Reed, chief executive of Reed Employment Services, says: "If you are an experienced secretary with up-to-date IT skills, you are in demand at the moment, with a range of interesting and rewarding career options to choose from."

"Therefore, it is crucial to get current IT skills if you want to be successful. Now is the time to check what is required. If necessary, take advantage of the free cross-training on offer to those registered with recruitment specialists, such as Reed."

CURRENT SHORTAGE OF SKILLS

Percentage of employers with specific skills shortages	Autumn 1997 (%)	Change since spring 97 (%)
PA/secretary (director level)	19	+3
Shorthand secretary (dept/manager level)	15	+3
Secretary with languages	10	+1
Wordprocessing secretary	8	0
Switchboard	8	0
Customer service clerk	8	New
Legal secretary	7	0
Telephone sales clerk	7	0
Medical secretary	6	0
DTP secretary	5	0
Administration clerk	5	0
Office manager	4	0

Source: Reed Salary Survey

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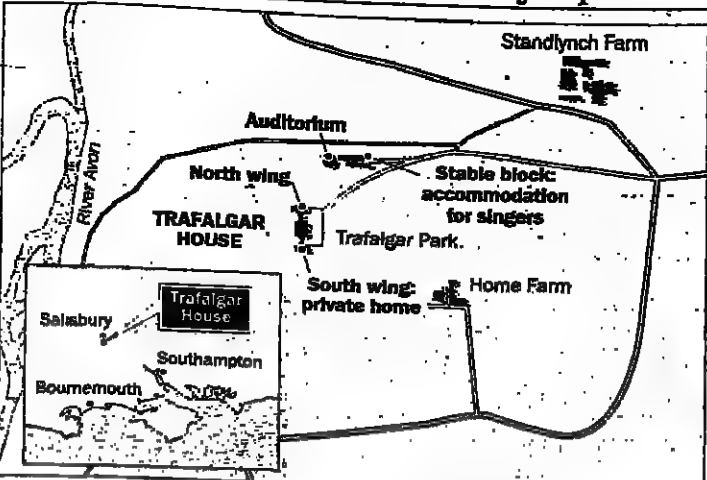
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The stately home battle of Trafalgar

How much influence should a conservation group wield over somebody else's property? Rachel Kelly reports



Michael Wade is cross. The new owner of Trafalgar Park, a Wiltshire stately home that last month was named Country Life's "Country house of the year", is at odds with the Georgian Group.

Mr Wade wants to turn this mid-18th century pink brick house with its large wings into a centre for music. It would be run by a trust with an auditorium inside the derelict north wing and private accommodation for Mr Wade and his wife in the south. But last week the Georgian Group penned a report describing the damaged north wing interiors as of "international importance".

The group could not condone the destruction of such rooms," the report continues. "Despite the dereliction within, the wing remains structurally sound and its interiors could be restored."

Instead, the group suggested a

free-standing auditorium to be built close by, leaving the latter to be used as additional accommodation for sponsors.

"It is to be hoped that this will result in an agreed scheme which will both fulfil the trust's musical ambitions and restore Trafalgar to its full glory." So Mr Wade has been forced to think again, two years after he bought the house and 15 acres of estate for around £1 million. He estimates he has spent around £40,000 on architect's fees drawing up new plans.

"I'm very frustrated," he says. "The group has objected using the very slightest information, without full-blown research. They've put the obligation back on me."

Such debate lies at the heart of the dilemma facing new owners of the nation's stately homes. Like Mr Wade, they are seduced by architectural gems such as Trafalgar which are in need of major repairs. They buy flush with optimism about



Michael Wade's plans for Trafalgar Park are under attack by the Georgian Group, which objects to the construction of an auditorium in the north wing, right

plans they hope will herald a secure and upbeat future, only to be frustrated by the intricacies of negotiating with conservation lobbies such as the Georgian Group and ultimately English Heritage.

"Sometimes one feels as if these groups would prefer to see these houses fall down rather than sanction something new," Mr Wade says.

His lament is all the more poignant when one considers Trafalgar's chequered history. The house's future has been uncertain since its sale by the 5th Earl Nelson in the 1840s.

Built by the banker Sir Peter Vandepuit in 1733 to designs by John James, it was subsequently given as a gift from a grateful nation to the family of the hero of Trafalgar. On Nelson's death in 1805, his heir was his elder brother, the Rev. William Nelson, who succeeded him as Duke of Brontë and was created Earl Nelson of Trafalgar. After the expense of building Blenheim for the Duke of

Marlborough, Parliament decided not to build a new house for the Nelson family, but to buy the Standlynch estate south of Salisbury instead, renaming the house Trafalgar Park.

After its sale by the Nelson family, a bewildering succession of owners have lived there, including the Duke of Leeds, Viscount Chandos and a Swedish entrepreneur called Gunnar Bengtsson. The house became detached from its surrounding estate, finally being left with just seven acres in 1953, and has been in ever worse repair. The north wing has been eaten up by dry rot and developers were seeking to build in the grounds when Mr Wade bought the house at the end of 1995.

Mr Wade is to be congratulated on his efforts to date. He is deeply sympathetic to the house's plight, as is his wife, Caroline, daughter of Sir Francis Dashwood, who was brought up in another historic house, West Wycombe Park.

Unlike any previous owner, Mr

Wade has managed to buy 32 acres of parkland round the house to ensure its appropriate setting and has begun to repair the building. He is refreshingly modest about his plans. He has transferred the ownership to a newly-formed Trafalgar Park Trust, which will own and develop the house. His Trafalgar Foundation is a charity which aims to encourage young musicians and sponsor operatic performances. Ultimately, the trust will transfer ownership of the house to the foundation.

The whole point of this is that I am not trying to create a dynastic house for my heirs, but that the house should be a self-supporting business," Mr Wade, chief executive of the Lloyd's corporate vehicle CLM Insurance Fund, will make the most of his City contacts to ensure corporate support.

"I hope we see a greater development of these sort of houses being used for regional performances. Many pieces were composed to be played in just such settings."

He plans a five-bedroom, five-bathroom house for his family in the south wing, and 20 bedroom and bathroom suites, 12 in the main block of the house and eight either in the stable block or the north wing, depending on the site of the auditorium. He already has planning permission from Salisbury District Council to resite the drive and build two new lodge houses.

Now he is deciding his next move. He could follow the Georgian Group's suggestion and plump for a free-standing, temple-style auditorium or pursue his original suggestion for the north wing. "I believe there should be a requirement that if a conservation group wishes to oppose something, they must make a viable counter-proposal, at their expense."

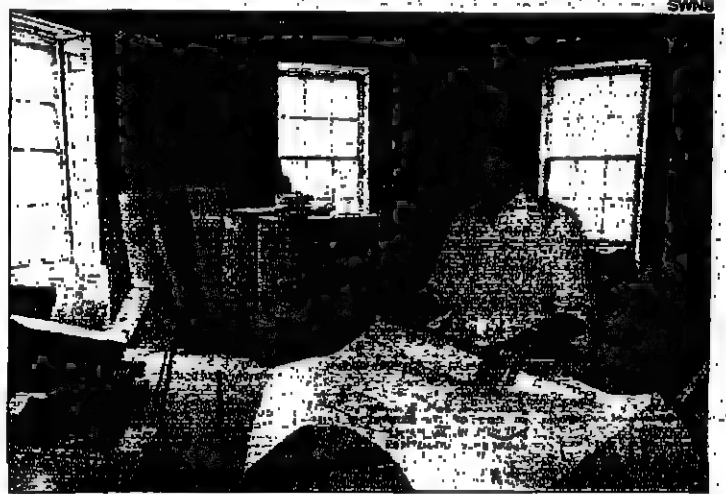
If, for example, he is to restore the north wing as the Georgian Group suggests, then where is he to find the fireplaces which have been ripped out? Where should he site

the necessary bathrooms? The basic premise that houses should be restored just as they were must change, Mr Wade says. "While respecting the integrity of the house and the architecture, we need to move a house and its purpose forward."

The problem is cash. The Georgian Group, as its secretary, Neil Burton points out, is run on a £25,000-a-year shoestring. Neither it nor English Heritage has the cash to produce counter-proposals.

Ultimately, Government must decide if it is to fund architectural proposals for such houses. One immediate problem, as Mr Burton points out, is how to distinguish between sensitive proposals such as those of Mr Wade and schemes of get-rich-quick property developers.

"Ultimately, whoever owns the property must be the most concerned," says Mr Burton. "They have the end responsibility to care for the house." It is to be hoped that Mr Wade has the courage and cash to handle such responsibility.



Michael Wade contemplates the north wing of Trafalgar Park

Amanda Loose on the uncertainties of housing on country estates

Much property writers' ink has been spilt recently on the number of fine estates up for sale. But less has been heard about the human problems that can accompany such sales: the fate of the tenants who live on such estates in tied cottages and houses.

Rising rents, absentee landlords or even the possibility of losing their homes altogether worry many tenants when great estates such as Luton Hoo are put on the market.

The tenants at Upton Cheyney, a hamlet of 12 cottages on an estate near Bath, feared rising rents when the estate was scheduled for auction in 29 separate lots earlier this month. About half intended to bid for their properties, but many feared they would be unsuccessful.

But the hamlet was bought lock, stock and estate cottage, reputedly for in excess of £1 million last month, by an unnamed investor.

The tenants now face new uncertainties. One said cautiously: "We are just waiting to see what the new landlord is like."

Sales are usually less troubled, says Clive Hopkins of Knight Frank: "A change of the man at the top does alter the atmosphere on the estate. Agricultural tenants are always keen to know if their new landlord will be more hands-on or hands-off, but otherwise have very little to fear if they are protected by full agricultural tenancy agreements."

Since the Seventies, farm-workers and their families have had a considerable degree of protection under the 1976 Rent (Agriculture) Act. If made redundant, agricultural workers are still covered by the Act. Other tenants are protected if they enjoy Protected Tenancies, with rents controlled by the local council.

Domestic employees in accommodation have most to fear, as such staff do not have the protection that agricultural employees enjoy. Not only do they possibly face losing their jobs, but their homes are protected by different statutes, offering a greater or lesser degree of protection. Many fear that the new owner will want to bring his own staff, particularly if he is moving from one estate to

Tied tenants fear for the future under new owners



Culham Court estate is for sale for about £6.5 million

another," Mr Hopkins says. New landlords have no obligation, however, to continue assured, shorthold tenancy agreements if they have lapsed, and can terminate the agreement by giving one or two months' notice.

When it comes to estates changing hands, much depends on the way such transfers are handled. James Laing at Strutt & Parker argues that a sensitively handled sale can do much to allay tenants' fears. "It is important to

last year, with many buyers looking to convert London money into country money."

Much of the market is fuelled by non-farming money, says Mr Marking, with many buyers looking to convert the profits from company flotations and the like into roll-over tax relief. Businesses can postpone their tax liability on the sale of their company by claiming reinvestment tax relief if they reinvest the proceeds.

Mr Hopkins believes that overseas buyers have not been deterred by a strong pound. "The boom reflects confidence in the economy, in all sectors of the marketplace, and also the strength of the property market itself," he says.

The "feel-good" factor is a major influence, says Mr Laing. "A few years ago people were shy about taking on the big house, although they felt there was money to be made in farming. But now they are confident enough to take on the house as well."

More than one agent has been surprised by the scramble. Andrew Macpherson of Clegg Kennedy Drew says: "I am surprised those with estates to sell didn't do so this time last year, as spectacular prices were being paid."

"I thought that the spring and summer of this year would be quiet, and I was proved wrong. The market is strong, and it is difficult to get your client in front in the bidding. But an estate still has to be right to sell well."

Privacy, an understated shabbiness and sense of tradition are *de rigueur*, according to Rupert Bradstock of the buying agents Property Vision. He says: "Demands have changed over the past ten years. In the booming market of the late Eighties people wanted very visible properties. Now it's more low key, with a certain style and class, beautiful houses which do not necessarily say 'Look what I can afford', but something with old-fashioned bathrooms and so on."

Knight Frank is selling the £6.5 million Culham Court estate, near Henley-on-Thames, for sale in three lots: Luton Hoo in Bedfordshire for £25 million; Cricket St Thomas in Somerset for around £8 million; and Hackwood Park in Hampshire for £15 to £20 million.

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How could a carmaker improve on the best and original GTI? Simply, with the VR6, above, the raciest Volkswagen Golf of them all. Sexy in black with black leather interior, our VR6 clings to the road like glue to provide one of the most rewarding driving experiences in motoring.

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Simply collect 10 differently numbered tokens from *The Times* and two differently numbered tokens from *The Sunday Times*. Tokens will be published daily until Saturday, November 2. Attach your tokens to the entry form which will be published on Saturday. Entries must be received by the closing date, Monday, November 10, 1997.

No purchase necessary. You can obtain bonus tokens and an entry form by sending a stamped SAE to: *The Times/Churchill's Token Request*, PO Box 5077, Leighton Buzzard LU7 7GD. A maximum of three bonus tokens per SAE permitted; requests must be received by November 1, 1997.

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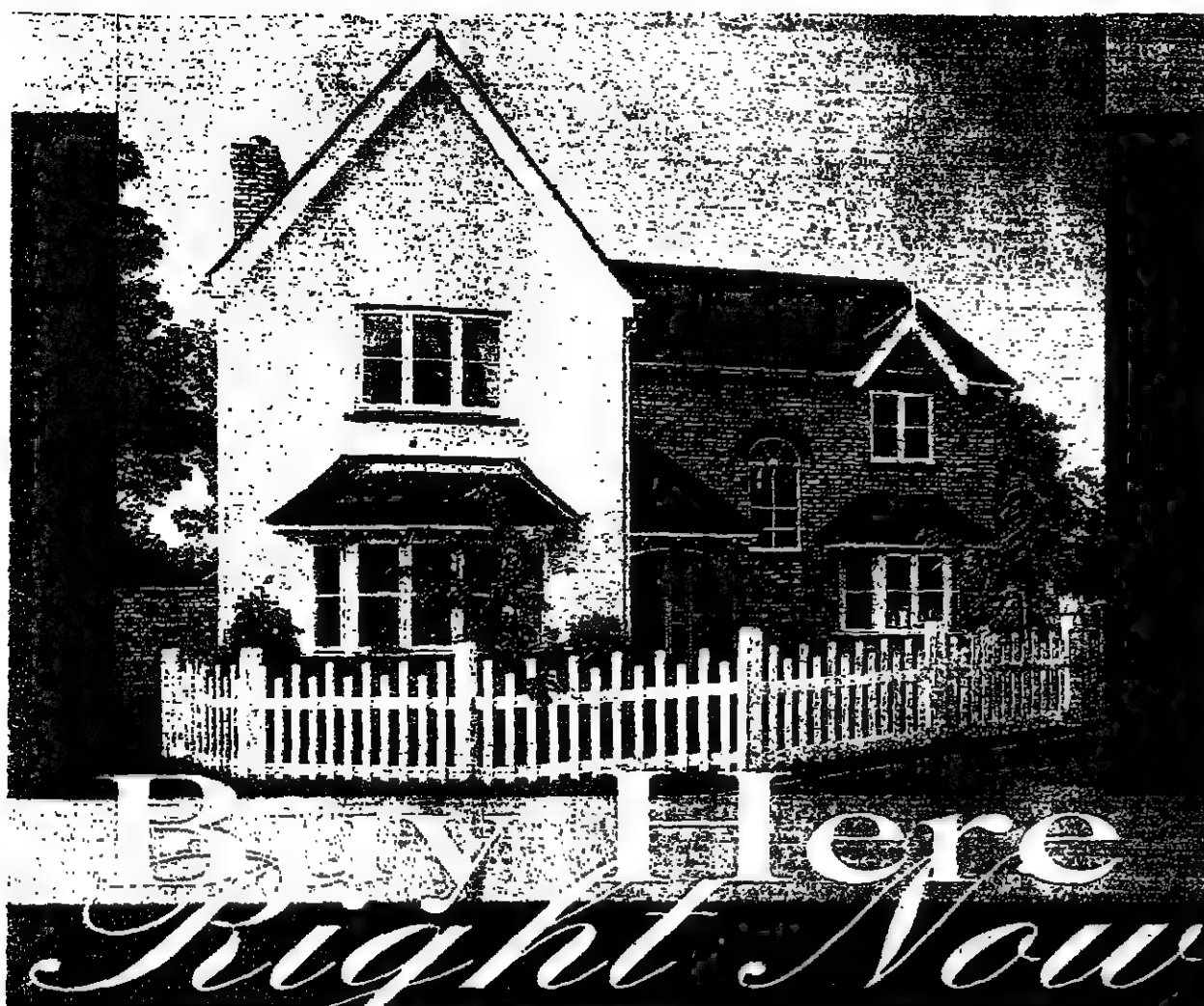
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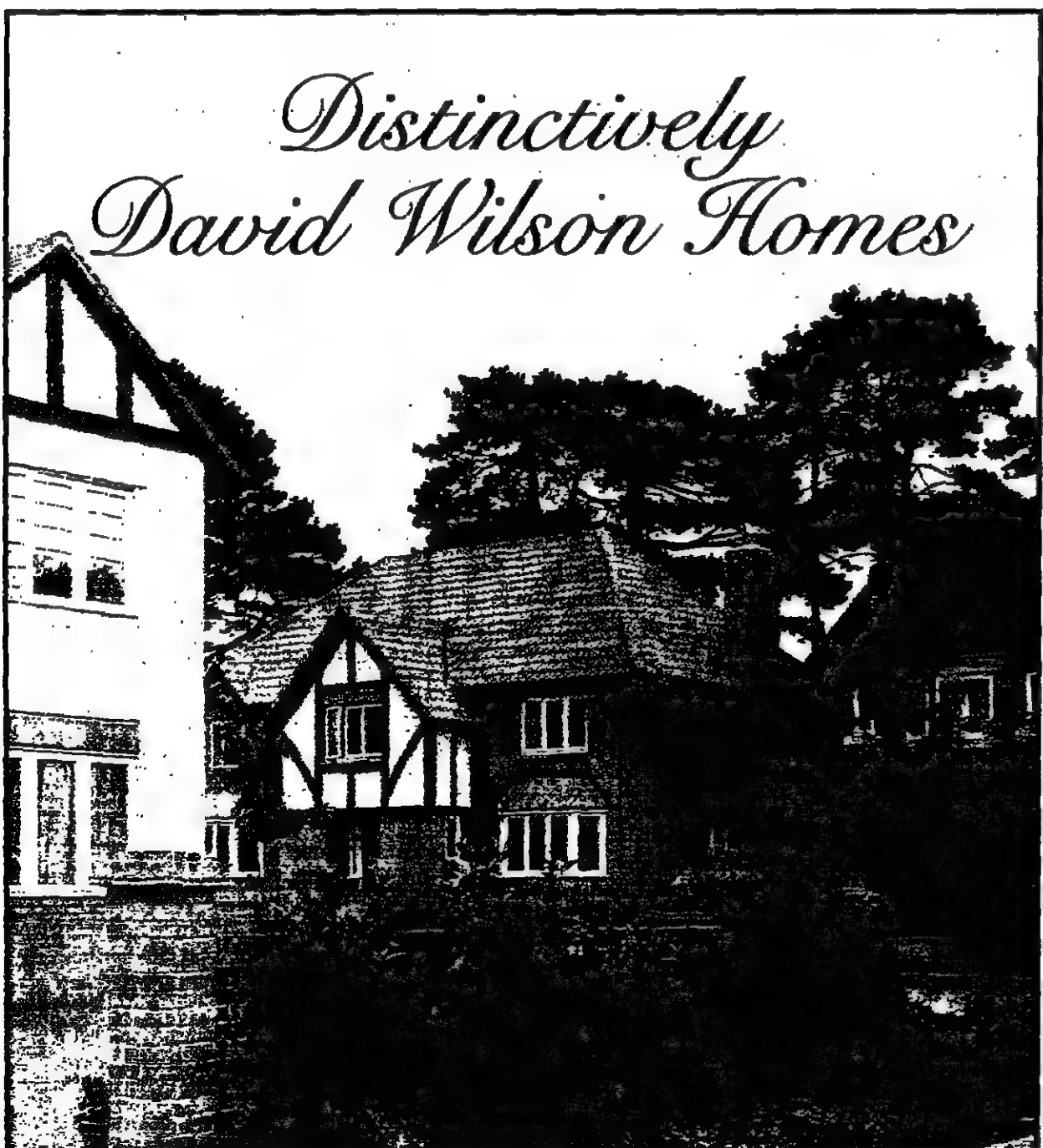
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Superb detached spacious bungalow consisting of 6 rooms, conservatory, large new fully fitted kitchen, 2 luxury bathrooms, 2 drives, 2 garages, new gas central heating, near underground station (Pinner). Park and local amenities nearby. Ready for immediate occupation.
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England welcome return of Miller

Hamed prepares American move

8-3; M. Lee bt Gonzalez 8-3, 7-5; A. Parnell
bt Fox 8-4, 6-4; Wood bt P. Robinson 8-3, 6-4.
Elsener bt L. Milligan 8-1, 8-2.

WARRIAL: Men's shuttle tournament (Gibson's table): First round: C Barnett vs G Wells 6-7, 8-1, 6-4; A Poppo (Glas) vs T Spinks 8-0, 6-2; A Cowan vs M Zahirovic (Bosnia) 6-3, 8-4; B Foster vs M Hilton 6-3, 6-7, 6-2; A González (Spa) vs W Herbert 7-4, 2-0, 7-4; A Fox vs M Grapone (Slovenia) 6-4, 6-2, 8-4; A Weal vs G Darlington 6-1, 8-2; G Emswiler (Glas) vs J Lyons 6-3, 7-6. Second round: D Shepherd vs Barnett 6-4, 4-1, rest: N Watts vs Foster 6-2, 2-1 rest: Cowan vs N Gould 6-3, 6-3; M Lee vs González 6-3, 7-6; A Parnell vs Fox 6-4, 6-4; Weal vs P Robinson 6-3, 6-4; Emswiler vs L Millican 6-1, 6-2.

Big fine awaits Collymore at Villa

By Richard Hobson

STAN COLLYMORE could be given a £25,000 fine when he returns to Aston Villa from England duty next week. Collymore was dismissed against Bolton Wanderers four days ago and Brian Little, the Villa manager, who has delayed imposing punishment until after the World Cup game in Rome, is likely to fine his troubled striker the equivalent of two weeks' wages.

Collymore threw a punch at Andy Todd and already faces a three-match ban, putting him out of the FA Cup Premiership fixtures against Wimbledon, Arsenal and Chelsea.

"Whatever the fine is will be between the player and manager. Stan has got no defence and must accept the consequences," Little said. Collymore will, however, be available for the Uefa Cup second-round, first-leg match against Athletic Bilbao on October 21, which falls during his domestic ban.

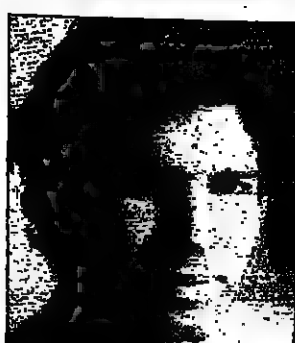
Steve Stone is ready to pledge his long-term future to Nottingham Forest after talks in London between Paul Sturford, his agent, and club officials. The midfielder player, capped nine times by England before a serious knee injury last year, has agreed a 10-year contract with the Nationwide League first division leaders. Stone, 26, is due to make his comeback after five weeks out with a hernia injury in a reserve game against Liverpool tonight.

Andy Townsend, the Ireland captain, will miss the World Cup qualifying group stage game against Romania in Dublin on Saturday because of a knee injury. Tommy Wright and Danny Griffin have pulled out of the Northern Ireland squad for the group nine match in Portugal or similar reasons, while England have lost Marcus Hall, Michael Duberry and Bruce Dyer for their European under-21 championship qualifying the against Italy in Bari, again because of injury.

Finals in France may represent last chance for experienced England players

Ince confronts a shrinking world

OLIVER HOLT



on the determination of the old brigade

SOME of the England squad turned down the chance of a fishing trip on Monday afternoon and went to the cinema instead. They watched a film about a group of men striving to overcome past disappointments and rescue their self-esteem with one grand strut on the big stage. Some of those who made their way back to their hotel at Burnham Beeches that evening found themselves identifying with the characters in *The Full Monty*.

In the days since Manchester United's victory over Juventus last week, the old-timers in the squad have watched as observers penned their paeans of praise to youth and rejoiced in the fact that Gary Neville, David Beckham, Paul Scholes and Nicky Butt are ready to lead English football into the brightest of futures.

They have listened as Neville and Beckham, intimated by the confidence of never having known failure, made bold by the expectation of success, spoke bullishly about the time having come for England to make their actions speak louder than their words. They have heard them talk about how there is nothing to fear from men such as Gianfranco Zola and Paolo Maldini, how they are nothing special.

They know, too, that if England fail in Rome and fall by the wayside in the play-offs, Neville and Beckham and players such as Robbie Fowler



Le Saux, who underlined the threat presented by Zola, poses at Bisham Abbey yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

and Steve McNamara will have other chances to qualify for the World Cup finals. For them, though, Japan and South Korea in 2002 will be a tournament too far. Italy versus England in Rome is their last chance and they have to take it.

In the end, it was Paul Ince who spoke out for the old brigade at Bisham Abbey yesterday. He pointed out that Tony Adams, for all the effort he has given, all the blood and sweat that he has shed, has

never played in the World Cup. Teddy Sheringham has never appeared on football's biggest stage either, nor has Ian Wright, for so long one of England's most celebrated exponents of the striking art.

All of them, Ince said, know that this is their last chance to make it. The finals, with their four-year cycle, drop heavy hints of mortality for a player's career each time they come around and the Liverpool captain said that, even at

29, he was vulnerable to them, too.

"People say to me that there is still the next time for me," Ince said, "but I know that realistically that is not true. There are other younger players coming through in midfield positions all the time, people like Barry and Becks, and I will be 34 next time. I think maybe the more experienced players will be even more keyed up for the game in Rome because we realise how much is at stake.

"This is my time. This is the chance for me to go out knowing that I achieved everything I aimed for. I have looked round the squad and seen Teddy, Tony and Wrighty and for us to end our careers knowing that we have never appeared in the World Cup is unthinkable. That is the pinnacle for everybody and this time I feel a lot stronger and better equipped to deal with it.

something I need more than anything else. It is the sort of thing you can point to when you have retired and enjoy. Too many times in the past we have come so close but failed. Against Germany in Euro 96 and Holland in 1993, we have been right on the edge but not near enough. Now this is the best chance we have of putting the record straight."

Almost as if to fit in with this older, wiser mood of circumspection, much of the talk at the camp yesterday, the eve of the departure for Rome, centred around the damage to the dream of qualification that could be wrought by Zola.

If others have attempted to knock him down in recent days, he was built up yesterday.

"Whether he is playing well or not," Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, said, "Zola can always change it with a bit

'For us to end our careers without playing in the World Cup is unthinkable'

of magic. We have those types of players as well but he is a major threat. We have learnt certain things about him by watching him week in and week out at Chelsea, like how much possession he gets from throw-ins. That little bit of genius he has got - you never know when that is going to happen."

Graeme Le Saux, another who, particularly with the emergence of Phil Neville, might be facing his last chance to make England's starting line-up in a World Cup, also devoted his thoughts to his Chelsea team-mate.

After paying tribute to Zola, both as a person and a player, Le Saux was asked if he read any significance into the fact that the diminutive Italian had been spotted recently carrying a John Le Carré novel under his arm. "That is for him to stand on," Le Saux said.

Referee for Rome confirmed by Fifa

By Russell Kempson

MARIO VAN DER ENDE, of Holland, has been reconfirmed as the referee for England's World Cup match against Italy in Rome on Saturday. Fifa, the sport's world governing body, said yesterday that it saw no reason to reconsider his appointment for the vital group two qualifying fixture.

A newspaper report at the weekend suggested Van der Ende might not be suitable to take charge because of his liking of all things Italian, which he admitted in a recent article in a Dutch magazine. Van der Ende, 41, a part-time teacher, was also said to be a close friend of an Italian member of Fifa's referees' commission.

"Mario has refereed many big matches over the past few years," a Fifa spokesman said yesterday. "There's a major difference between having a general liking for a country and giving it an advantage out on the pitch. This story is too far-fetched to think about."

Ryan Giggs, the Manchester United winger, could lead Wales in their group seven qualifying match against Belgium in Brussels on Saturday. With Gary Speed, the captain, and Mark Hughes, his probable replacement, suspended, Giggs, 23, is favourite to become the youngest player to lead the Principality side.

Mike England, the Tottenham Hotspur centre half, was given the honour when he was 22. Adrian Williams could play in two games this weekend. He travels with the Wales squad for the qualifying game against Belgium on Saturday, while Wolverhampton Wanderers are making special arrangements to fly the central defender home from Brussels ahead of the official return journey to enable him to play in the Nationwide League first division game against Birmingham City on Sunday.

CRICKET: SUSSEX FAVOURED TO CAPTURE SERVICES OF THE AUSTRALIA LEG SPINNER AFTER PROTRACTED NEGOTIATIONS

Warne doubts removed

By Simon Wilde

JUSTIN ROBERTSON, the agent for Shane Warne, has chafed at the fact that the Australian leg spinner will not, after all, be playing county cricket in England next year. Robertson, who is based in Australia, has assured the three counties vying for Warne's services that he will definitely sign for one of them.

The patience of officials at Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Sussex was wearing thin two weeks ago when Warne put back his self-appointed deadline on a decision for a fifth time: he had originally said he would make a decision at the end of July, in the middle of the Test series in England. One club official had

said: "I would be half-surprised if he came to anybody." But Robertson has been in touch with the counties to reassure them of Warne's intentions and his verdict is expected within the next ten days. It could even come as early as the weekend in a Sunday tabloid newspaper.

"I spoke briefly to Austin last week and it is simply a matter of Shane making a decision," Steve Coverdale, the Northamptonshire chief executive, said yesterday.

"It's a frustrating time at the moment but his agent has said that he is 100 per cent sure to play county cricket next year," David Gilbert, the new Sussex director of cricket, said.

The arrival of Gilbert, an Australian, at Hove has strengthened the view that Sussex will win the race. Their offer is being brokered by Tony Greig, now resident in Australia, and includes the captaincy. Warne wants to work with developing players and the coast may suit his young family.

Pakistan grateful for impact made by Test newcomers

By Our Sports Staff

PAKISTAN unveiled another impressive new arrival on the international stage on the second day of the first Test against South Africa in Rawalpindi. Azhar Mahmood followed the century scored by Ali Naqvi, who is also making his debut, by scoring 72 not out.

His innings helped Pakistan to reach 345 for nine in their first innings. The 29 scored by Mohammad Ramzan meant that three newcomers have contributed 216 of Pakistan's total.

Mahmood helped Pakistan to recover from 231 for eight as he shared in a ninth-wicket partnership of 74 with Waqar Younis, who made 45, his best Test score.

Mahmood, an all-rounder, struck a six and five fours in his 173-ball innings while Waqar was in a more attacking mood, hitting five fours and two sixes from the 81 balls that he faced. He passed his

previous best of 34, against New Zealand at Christchurch in 1995-96, by hitting Allan Donald for a six over the long-leg boundary.

However, Waqar had a taste of his own medicine when he was trapped leg-

before by an inswinging yorker by Shaun Pollock. After the departure of Waqar, Mahmood found another dependable partner in Mushtaq Ahmed and the pair added 40 runs.

Pakistan resumed on 216 for six but soon lost two wickets. Moïn Khan was first to go when Donald, after a barrage of bouncers, bowled one of full length to dismiss him leg-before for 12. Saqlain Mushtaq went in the same manner before he had scored to give Pollock a third wicket.

The South Africa attack was depleted after Brett Schultz, the left-arm pace bowler, sustained a shoulder injury while fielding and was unable to bowl.

"Brett had complained of a little pain in the shoulder last evening but when he got up this morning, he found that he just couldn't move his bowling shoulder," S.K. Reddy, the South Africa manager, said.

SCOREBOARD

PAKISTAN: First Innings
 "Saqlain Arshad c Richardson b Donald 16
 Ali Naqvi c Krieger b Donald 72
 Mohammad Ramzan lbw b Pollock 29
 Azhar Mahmood c Symcox 11
 Mushtaq Ahmed c Richardson b Schultz 4
 Mohammad Waseem c Krieger b Symcox 11
 Moïn Khan lbw b Donald 12
 Azhar Mahmood not out 72
 Saqlain Mushtaq lbw b Pollock 45
 Waqar Younis lbw b Pollock 46
 Mushtaq Ahmed not out 6
 Extras (D 2, LB 7, NB 11) 20
 Total (9 wickets) 345
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-45, 2-114, 3-138, 4-156, 5-196, 6-206, 7-220, 8-231, 9-305
BOWLING: Donald 29.1-3-95-3, Schultz 15.4-3-1-42-3, Pollock 31.1-4-62-3, Mahmood 11.4-2-2-5, Symcox 28.1-0-1-2, Kallis 7.6-15-0, Cronje 4.0-13-0
SOUTH AFRICA: G Krieger, A M Saqlain, H J Kallis, D J Giffen, TWJ Cronje, B M McMillen, S M Pollock, TDJ Richardson, PL Symcox, AA Donald, B N Schultz, Urquhart, S Venkataraghavan (India) and Javed Ahmed (Pakistan)

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TENNIS: HUBER BATTLES HARD BUT FAILS TO REPEAT HER EARLIER TRIUMPHS

Steady Fernandez turns on the power

By Our Sports Staff

MARY JOE FERNANDEZ, of the United States, defeated Anke Huber, the former champion, of Germany, 6-4, 6-4 yesterday in a first-round match at the Filderstadt WTA tournament.

Huber, who won there in 1991 and 1994 and was a finalist last year, fought hard in a match which lasted an hour and 23 minutes, taking both sets to 4-4 after coming from behind, but it was not enough to overcome the steady baseline play of Fernandez.

Huber, sixth in the world rankings and seeded sixth here, drew level in the eighth game of the first set, breaking service. But Fernandez, of Miami, rebroke in the ninth and held her own service to win in 40 minutes.

The second set was a similar story. Fernandez took a quick 3-0 lead, but Huber broke back in the fourth and eighth games to tie at 4-4 again.

Fernandez remained calm firing steady baseline shots waiting for the German to make mistakes. She broke Huber's service in the ninth game after fighting from duce four times, then held her own in the tenth to take the match.

Anna Kournikova, of Russia, produced a fine display to beat Barbara Schett, of Austria, 6-3, 7-6 in the first round.

Lorna Woodroffe, of Surrey, heads the British team that will be seeking a record fifth successive win over the United States in the Maureen Connolly Trophy in Manchester, October 23 to 25.

Louise Latimer of Warwickshire, Abigail Tordoff, of Kent, and the Essex duo, Mandy Wainwright and Amanda Jones complete the British team captained by the former Wimbledon champion, Ann Jones, in this annual match for players of 21 and under.



Kournikova, of Russia, powering her way to a first-round win over Schett, of Austria

Indian police extend match-fixing inquiry

INDIAN police are to extend investigations into allegations of match-fixing and illegal betting in cricket after a series of arrests in Calcutta. District superintendent of police, Surajit Kar Purakayastha, said the investigation, which is taking place at the same time as an independent inquiry into allegations that Indian players have been involved in fixing results, would be extended to other cities including Delhi and Bombay. He added that there was no evidence of leading players being involved.

An independent inquiry by a former chief justice of India, which has been backed by India's cricket administrators, was launched earlier this year into alleged player involvement in match-fixing. It followed claims by the former India all-rounder, Manoj Prabhakar, that he was offered money by a team-mate to ensure that India lost to Pakistan in a limited-overs tournament in 1994.

Television go-ahead

FOOTBALL: The Football Association last night stressed that there would be no formal objection to Scotland's World Cup fixture with Latvia being broadcast live on Saturday. With the rights to the Scotland game being sold to Channel 5 rather than BBC Scotland, it means that the match - a 3.00pm kick-off at Celtic Park - will be broadcast throughout Great Britain, instead of Scotland alone, and is now in direct competition with Nationwide League matches.

Although the English Football League voiced concern about the match being televised, it has been agreed that its importance should override concerns about its effect on Nationwide League attendances. If Scotland win, they will qualify for the finals in France next year.

Munro impresses

ORIENTEERING: Heather Munro, of Great Britain, won the Park World Tour race in Cesky Krumlov yesterday, beating Lucy Bohm, of Austria, the world short-course champion, into second place. The series leader, Gunilla Svard, from Sweden, finished third. Competitors raced through the twisting streets of the picturesque Czech town and Munro's time of 18min 47sec beat Bohm by almost half a minute, consolidated her in third place in the overall standings and moved her within range of the silver-medal position before the series finale through the streets of Venice on Saturday.

Global ambition

CRICKET: China, Japan and other Asia-Pacific countries are to be the target of a crusade led by Australia and New Zealand to find new cricket nations. Malcolm Speed, the Australian Cricket Board's new chief executive, outlined the project at the launch of the Australian season at the Melbourne Cricket Ground yesterday. "This is part of the International Cricket Council's push to make cricket a global game," he said. "We are looking at a number of potential countries where we might seek to develop the game, and these include China and Japan, with their huge populations."

Repeat performance

TENNIS: Jonathan Stark, the defending champion from the United States, beat his compatriot, Michael Chang, 7-6, 7-6 in the second round of the Heineken Open in Singapore yesterday. The two had met in the final of the tournament last year, when Stark also won in straight sets. Stark now meets Jiri Novak, of the Czech Republic. Marcelo Rios, of Chile, had an easier second-round match against Justin Gimelstob, the young American, winning 6-2, 6-4.



Montgomerie, watched by the Lynne Truss, right, displays his technique yesterday while preparing for the Toyota World Match Play Championship

Hunger drives not-so-full Monty

Lynne Truss enjoys a tasty portion of golfing and dietary advice from Colin Montgomerie at Wentworth

Now I don't want to get too technical here. Either you find this sort of thing interesting or you don't. But yesterday morning at Wentworth, Colin Montgomerie gave a really dangerous tip to a dozen amateurs.

"I always do the full backswing," he explained first, drawing the club back, grip in place, weight distributed, head down. And then, as the clubhead dangled ahead of him, a few degrees below the horizontal, he said: "And then, when I see the clubhead out of the corner of my eye, I say: 'That's it. Go.'"

This may not be big news to many people, but to several of us listening, it was dynamite. "You mean to say, you take your eye off the ball?" we marvelled, remembering every single golf instruction manual that tells you never — ever — to look up. "I know, I know," he said, "but it's only for an instant."

"For me, it's part of the timing. I see the clubhead and: 'That's it. Go.' Besides, you don't need to look at the ball in order to hit it." At which point,

with absolute assurance, he closed his eyes and knocked a six-iron further than our open eyes could follow it.

This was a golf clinic organised by Ebel (the Swiss watch people) and watched by a tiny crowd on Wentworth's damp practice ground, before the big Toyota World Match Play Championship starts later on this week.

Monty was relaxed and chatty, answering anarchy questions about his clubs, showing us his loose putting grip, not even backflooded by well-meant observations beginning with those dread trigger words "major", "won", "never" and "you've". At one point, he indicated Ernie Els behind us on the driving range, wheeling his arms in that beautiful, effortless arc of his. "Ernie doesn't hit the ball," he said, approvingly. "The ball just gets in the way."

We nodded. We laughed. We felt very, very humble. Blimey, why didn't anyone ever tell me Colin Montgomerie was so nice?

Whether such a nice chap should be playing merry banas with the orthodox golfers is another matter, of course.

along the lines of "Izzy Whizzy Let's Get Busy".

Yet here he was preaching all sorts of heresies, such as to glance up, hit with our eyes closed, don't swivel your hips, forget your hands and above all (impossible), don't think about more than two of these things at once.

In this week of build-up to the uncertainties of Rome, it's nice to see someone so happily trailing clouds of glory as Monty was yesterday. Compared with a major tournament,

"We play for five hours a day, which leaves 19 for eating. Look, there's a burger van..."

Personally, I know that if I looked up to check the clubhead before commencing the downswing, I would get vertigo and fall over backwards, topping the ball in the process. What we secretly wanted Monty to tell us, I suspect, was the same old "Head down and don't press" but with a patent Celtic incantation to recite mentally —

he says, the pressure of a Ryder Cup is "times ten" — Ernie Els may have a fabulous swing, but he's never looked down the barrel of the Ryder Cup's last tee.

Monty, tells us that, at Valderrama, the American team had a banner in their team room proclaiming: "Losing is worse than death", which he thinks (and I agree

wholeheartedly) may have been counter-productive, encouragement-wise.

Finally, I can't suppress the big question any more. "Colin, I hurt. How did you lose 38lbs in a fortnight?" "I kept my mouth shut," he says, and gets a big laugh. The true figure, it turns out, was 20lbs in 17 days, which he says he achieved just through ignoring the siren calls of junk food.

"You see, we play golf for five hours a day, which leaves, well, 19 for eating. There's a burger van over there," he adds, and there is, he's right, good heavens, he's spotted one.

"Does the loss of weight affect the golf, though?" I persist. "I mean, you need weight behind the shot, don't you?" But he is quick to realise what's happening here — that an over-large woman is fishing for a novel excuse not to diet. "I played through it," he assures me. "Losing a lot of weight all at once can affect people's golf, yes. But personally I was fine." Thanks, Colin, I mean to say, but somehow it comes out "Damn."

SAILING: FRENCHMAN DOMINATES FIRST LEG OF SINGLE-HANDED TRANSATLANTIC RACE

Bad luck dogs MacArthur

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

MARK TURNER and Ellen MacArthur, the two Britons competing in the Mini-Transit single-handed transatlantic race, have enjoyed mixed fortunes in the first leg, with MacArthur finishing in 26th place when she sailed into Tenerife yesterday.

The race has been a learning experience that has left

MacArthur disappointed but still determined to improve in the 2,700-mile second leg to Martinique, which starts on October 19, and to go on from there into a campaign for the Around Alone single-handed round-the-world race next year.

Her troubles stemmed from rushed preparation, which itself resulted from a lack of adequate sponsorship money until very shortly before the

start. As a result MacArthur, on *Financial Dynamics*, found herself a mile from the start line at Brest, hoisting a new spinnaker that she had not even had time to take out of its sailbag. It was only then that she discovered that it had been made to about three-quarters of its required size.

"It was a disaster. I almost cried when I saw it," she said yesterday while having lunch with Turner, who finished on Monday afternoon, in ninth place. "That spinnaker was unlucky from the start," she added. "Every time I put it up something went wrong."

Turner, sailing a boat that he chartered only 12 days before the start, has done well to finish in the top ten. With the race scored on total elapsed time, a top-five finish is certainly within his grasp. However, he will be hoping for atypical trade-wind conditions on the next leg, with as much reaching and upwind work as possible since his boat, *Carphone Warehouse*, tends to bury her nose going downwind, as a result of her keel being fractionally too far forward.

The first-leg winner, and by a good margin, was Sébastien Magnen, of France. Another of the favourites, the Frenchman Thomas Coville, did well to reach Tenerife in sixth place after losing both his spinnakers in the first three days.

Dutch make pitstop to repair whale damage

Innovation Kvaerner, Merit Cup and EF Language, the fleet leaders, are beating into freshening headwinds of up to 20 knots as they race towards Fernando de Noronha which they leave to port, before heading south-south-east towards the second rounding point of Trinidad from where they turn south-east towards Cape Town.

Silk Cut, the British boat skipped by Lawrie Smith, remains in fourth place ahead of *Chessie Racing*.



Ubiquity, thy name is Carol Vorderman

No vets at all last night and only two Carol Vordermans. And they call this television? Vorderman One, of course, was *Countdown*, a show so addictive that at least one senior captain of industry takes his phone off the hook just so that he can watch her shuffle the consonants and vowels in peace.

Vorderman Two was... well, what it would be this time. More silly gadgets? Another vanload of antique experts? Not more paranormal nonsense, please? The nation held its breath. Music and... action! "Hello and welcome to a brand new series called... Yes, yes? 'Mysteries' with me, Carol Vorderman." What a pro: she barely stumbled — *Mysteries* with Carol Vorderman (BBC1) it was.

And guess what mystery number one was? No, no, no, Vorderman manages to be on the television all the time (cleverly she

confesses in this week's *Radio Times* that it's because she is cheap) but what happened to Glenn Miller? "What really happened on that fateful day?" she asked, raising the tension to levels that were quite definitely imaginable.

Helped by a Miller nephew who was quite happy to ham it up for the cameras ("they say he lost his first game of poker in England") it turned out to be quite an interesting ten minutes. Had Miller's plane been taken out by friendly fire, as a returning bomber squadron dumped its unused payload over the Channel? Had he died in a warehouse, as a German writer alleged, for reasons that escaped me? Or had he simply gone away to die of an incurable wasting disease, as his nephew suggested?

Questions, questions, questions. Or, as Vorderman put it, as she stalked around an empty art museum: "In spite of our search

for absolute truth, much still happens that defies simple explanation." Such as how a scriptwriter who can come out with a line like that stays in employment.

Mystery number two, otherwise known as the man who mistook a hernia for a tumour, and was so relieved when it wasn't he opted for surgery under hypnosis rather than anaesthesia, was even more exciting. For me anyway, as I discovered that I used to know down from the hypnotherapist. "Look, look, it's number 37," I shouted. Vorderman, by now stalking around an empty operating theatre, ignored me.

At least, for mystery three, she got to go to Florida and put on a summer frock. She was there to look at the curative effect that dolphins have on disabled children, a story that could have been swamped by sentiment. But the little girl at the centre of it



Matthew Bond

had had such an awful time (her twin sister, had been killed by Beverly Hills, while she was left brain-damaged) that if swimming with dolphins worked for her — as it clearly did — that was fine by me. Refreshingly, that also seemed the approach adopted by the experts. "What's your favourite animal?" asked our Carol. "Pigs," said the girl, firmly. Lovely.

Six series and three episodes in is no time to start explaining the plot of *Soldier, Soldier* (ITV), especially if you've missed large chunks of it. Suffice it to say, it's about soldiers, members of The King's Own Fusiliers, whose main attribute is that they seem to look younger every series. Last night's remarkable even by its own youthful standards until I realised that under the camouflage and helmets they really were schoolchildren. It was cadet day, or 'sulky teenagers run away from home day' as it is known in Sergeant Major Fitzpatrick's house.

Even the principal badie seemed to be struggling to escape adolescence, an impression heightened when his siege of the army careers office came to a premature end because he needed a few puffs on his inhaler. But that's *Soldier, Soldier*, through and through — it's deliciously mundane. Its idea of domestic drama is a row about kitchen surfaces and as for last

night's final line — any guesses from those who didn't see it? "Never mind your dad, we'll have Gary round for tea next week." Who says the cliffhanger is dead?

Despite all this, I rather like *Soldier, Soldier* and the producers have done a good job of breathing new life into it with the help of some fresh faces. James Cosmo gives everything a certain edge as the bad-tempered, misogynist Colonel, Lucy Cohu bridges beautifully as the off-mannered Major Bailey and Chris Gascoyne confirms that it's not his performance that's wrong in *The Locksmith*, it's the writing.

As Rossi, he's much better in this. But my current favourite is Michelle Butterly, whose Julie is fast turning into a Bianca. She already has the market stall, the hair and the attitude. If she could just do something about that accent.

On Channel 4, *Black Bag* kicked off a new series with a first-class documentary about female circumcision, a barbaric practice apparently given the prettier name of "cutting the rose". Produced by Liz Bloor, it was half investigative, half campaigning and, at all times, depressing. This was not so much because of the two men (one a doctor, one not) the programme unmasked as apparently willing to perform the illegal operation in this country, but because the girls are brought to them — or taken back to their country of origin for a "holiday" by their mothers. Female circumcision is something women do to women and nobody seems inclined to stop them.

Many agencies, we learnt, are deterred from interfering by the religious or cultural significance that surrounds the practice. But, as one Somali woman brave enough to speak out about it, put it: "Culture is about ideas and knowledge, not mutilation."

Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are: 10.5075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz.

Channel 5 News Early (0557-775) 7.30 Milkshake (701576) 7.35 USA High (1867458) 8.00 Hava Kazoo (8452175) 8.30 WideWorld (512) (578446) 9.00 Espresso presented by Patsy Coddwell (5624427) 10.00 Evolution (8363750) 10.30 Animal Calypso (1) (7) (8431682) 11.00 Looza (3418345) 11.50 Double Espresso (4435678) 12.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Macy and Thorne's wedding is interrupted by the police, looking to arrest someone for the murder of Mavis (1) (8422934) 12.30pm Family Affairs (1) (7) (8213755) 1.00 5 News Update (0922235) 1.50 Sunset Beach. Meg finds herself in a frightening situation (1) (1472311) 2.00 5's Company (4785717) 3.30 Separate Tables (1983) with Alan Bates and Julie Christie. A made-for-television version of Terence Rattigan's play set in a 1950s British seaside hotel. Directed by John Schlesinger (2052595) 5.30 Whistle (1) (8435768) 6.00 100 Per Cent (8425311) 6.30 Family Affairs. As Elsa's star continues to rise, Claire despairs at her future in showbusiness and considers terminating the pregnancy (1) (8416663) 7.00 Exclusive. How to choose that vital second role (8273953) 7.30 Beauty Britain. A look at a rapidly vanishing feature of village life, the duck pond (8445175) 8.00 Inland Gardens. William Van Hage lives a small South Island garden in a little piece of New Zealand paradise (8262601) 8.30 5 News (5275408)

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ICE HOCKEY 42

The 17-year-old aiming for his American Dream

SPORT

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8 1997

GOLF 46

Lynne Truss watches Colin Montgomerie take his eye off the ball



Midfield player's growing maturity able to offset England's loss of Ferdinand

Hoddle happy to put faith in Gascoigne

BY MATT DICKINSON

GLENN HODDLE'S catchphrase for the week, and one he has used a dozen times already, is "inner belief". The England coach has it in abundance and not even the first unsettling ripples could disturb his seemingly unshakable calm yesterday.

The first stone lobbed in his direction came when Les Ferdinand was forced to withdraw from the party that flies out to Rome this afternoon for the tumultuous World Cup qualifying match against Italy on Saturday. The Tottenham Hotspur striker has suffered a recurrence of a stomach strain, but it is a sign of England's confidence—and of the strength and depth of the squad—that Hoddle will have been less perturbed than Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager.

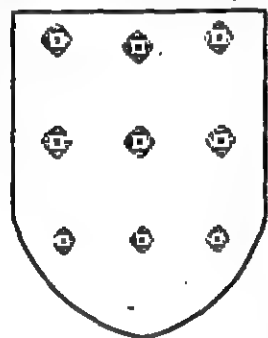
Almost inevitably, the second cause for concern centred on Paul Gascoigne, whose arrival in Rome this afternoon will provoke as much, and quite probably more, frenzy than if he was to wander unannounced along Oxford Street.

Hoddle has talked of careful plans to try to shield his players from the inevitable hype surrounding the match, and arriving at their hotel—where English newspapers will be banned—with three days to prepare is intended to cocoon the squad from external pressures.

In Gascoigne's case, such protection will be vital. The worst-case scenario being banded around Bisham Abbey yesterday was the unlikely prospect of the England midfielder player being met by a posse of Italian lawyers with writs to serve, stemming back to Gascoigne's spell in Rome with Lazio. One has reportedly been threatened by one member of the paparazzi still

chasing damages from an altercation outside a restaurant, while another writ is allegedly under consideration by tax investigators checking up on dozens of the country's millionaires.

Of more pressing interest will be the reception that Gascoigne receives from the Italian public, which never knew quite what to make of



Last chance — 45
Troubled Collymore — 45

his days as a Lazio player in the Olympic Stadium.

The impact of Gascoigne the footballer on Serie A was fitful during two seasons in which he showed only glimpses of his talent and badly injured himself in a training ground incident. Gascoigne the celebrity is an entirely different matter and his obvious desperation to succeed, combined with his well-reported off-field antics, made him a cult figure.

Either way, he will be the centre of frenzied attention when England arrive today, to be met by a host country equally consumed with passion for the final group two game, when England need only a draw to be sure of a place in the World Cup finals in France.

Hoddle is confident, though, that the 30-year-old

Rangers player is a changed man from the young, emotional international who wept in front of the Italian public during the 1990 finals. "Paul and I had a good chat when he arrived on Sunday," Hoddle said. "I don't think he will get carried away. He knows it will be a team effort if we are going to get the right result. From what I have seen, he is playing with his head, not his heart."

The way he approached the Moldova game was different. I had not seen that before. He was a lot more focused, a lot quieter, and the performance showed it. Even the reaction after he scored, and on television afterwards, reflected that it was not the normal Gazza, and I think that is what we need.

"I think possibly he realises this could be his last chance of the world stage, although I believe players can go on until they are 35 or 36 if they look after themselves."

One player who will not be involved is Ferdinand, who visited a specialist yesterday morning after a scan confirmed that he may need a hernia operation, which could rule him out for up to two months. Hoddle, who seems certain to pair Ian Wright and Teddy Sheringham in attack, did not consider calling up a replacement, with Robbie Fowler, Stan Collymore and the two Pauls, Scholes and Merson, also in the squad.

"It would be a massive game for whoever we brought in and I am happy and secure with what we have got in that position," Hoddle said. "Les withdrawing is a blow because everything was looking plain sailing, but we have a 24-man squad and we will get by." Francis's reaction is likely to be considerably less philosophical.

The Tottenham manager was just daring to believe that the run of injuries that have destroyed his hopes for a settled team had come to an end, with Ferdinand and Chris Armstrong beginning to forge a partnership. Even Darren Anderson is believed to be within two weeks of a first-team return, but Ferdinand's injury is yet another grave setback.



Roman holiday: Paul Ince is persuaded to don gladiatorial garb at Bisham Abbey as the hype over England's World Cup match against Italy increases

Maldini personifies Italian unease

Brian Glanville reports from Florence on the form of the men who will oppose England on Saturday

At last the Florentines seem to have relaxed. Time was not so long ago, that Italy's national team had to give up training at the football centre of Coverciano, on the outskirts of the city, so bitterly were they abused by Fiorentina supporters.

This because the core of the *Azzurri* came at that time from Juventus, the club most detested by Fiorentina fans. But though Juve still have several players in Cesare Maldini's squad, they are not as predominant as before. Some, such as Lombardo and Vieri, have gone to play abroad. An animus remains, but it has eased a little.

There is no doubt that the Italians are approaching the game against England with some trepidation in the image of Maldini, their coach. Journalists and supporters have been all too predictably quick to pillory him after victory at Wembley was followed by a series of stilted performances, including the costly goalless draws in Poland and Georgia. If Maldini could only relax,

could regain the tranquillity he had when he emerged from his favourite Milanese restaurant to take over the national team at 64, then his players could relax, in their turn.

As it is, they showed in the first half in Georgia that they have clearly seized up. Not because, as happened under the previous coach, Arrigo Sacchi, they are drilled into cautious schemes that do not suit them, but because things have somehow gone wrong and a different kind of caution, caused by fear rather than by tactics, has superseded it. It was all too plain in Tallin.

The good news for Maldini is that Christian Vieri, the centre forward, was in form last weekend for Atletico Madrid and that those two clever but criticised lightweight, Del Piero and Inzaghi, looked sharp for Juventus against Fiorentina. Nesta, of Lazio,



expected to take over at centre back for the injured Ferrara, also did well against Internazionale's formidable Romulo.

Nesta and Gascoigne: there is a history here. It was the wholly innocent Nesta, then just a Lazio junior, who inadvertently broke the England player's leg in a training game a few years back when Gascoigne, in one of those strange excesses of his, tried to

tackle him from behind when Nesta was in the act of shooting.

Less encouraging for Maldini was the poor form of Costacurta, his other central defender, for Milan against Empoli, while the loss of both Di Matteo, suspended, and Conte, his obvious replacement, injured, seriously weakened the midfield. Both the midfield men, Di Francesco and Di Biagio, played well in Roma's thrashing of Napoli in the Olympic Stadium on Sunday.

Maldini has called up another young centre back in Galliani, of Internazionale, one of the players he brought out in his successful Italy Under-21 team. Galliani, however, hardly seems ready for

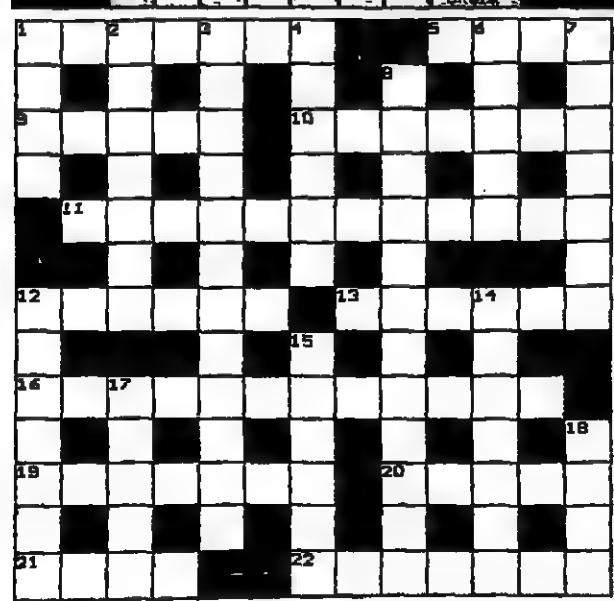
his first cap, especially in such circumstances.

Memories, meanwhile, abound. In May 1952, Italy played England, still having failed to beat them, here for the only time and drew 1-1. Silvio Piola, a 1938 World Cup winner and a centre forward who punched a goal that stood against England in Milan in 1939, was kicked at the end of the game by Jack Froggatt, the England centre half, who said afterwards he had had enough of being elbowed. An anticlimatic end, at 39, to Piola's international career.

Later, again in Florence, I reminded him of that punched goal. "It was a beautiful header," he laughed, and then punching over his shoulder, said, "No, no I went like this."

The departure of Graeme Souness from the manager's job at Torino was confirmed yesterday.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1219

- ACROSS
1 Balcony wall (7)
5 Hit wildly; work hard (4)
9 Lowest point (5)
10 Miserable (7)
11 Be short of money (4,3,5)
12 OT book; decides (6)
13 Church caretaker (6)
16 Muscle strengthening (4-8)
19 Swiss canton, lake, alfalfa (7)
20 Guide, flier (5)
21 Husband of countess (4)
22 Its child full of grace (7)

- DOWN
1 A pool (4)
2 Auburn person (7)
3 Two rails for gymnast (8,4)
4 That hurt! (6)
6 Flower; Pooter's son (5)
7 Monster, takes Alice to Mock Turtle (7)
8 Lamb/potato dish (9,3)
12 Celebration, anniversary (7)
14 Confused, twisted together (7)
15 Quiet (Night, carol) (6)
17 Furnishing, colour etc scheme (5)
18 Detainee remain (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1218

ACROSS: 1 Wrap 3 Sporting 8 Rick 9 Passport 11 Obscure 14 Slogan 15 Effete 17 Figurehead 20 Examined 21 Palm 22 Dirty bag 23 Tern
DOWN: 1 Warhorse 2 Ancestor 4 Placid 5 Reshuffled 6 Iron 7 Gate 10 Equanimity 12 Beverage 13 Herdsman 16 Eureka 18 Feud 19 Want

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Elevation of Elkington rankles with Mickelson

BY JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

PHIL MICKELSON, the United States Ryder Cup player who is competing in his third consecutive event in Europe, arrived at Wentworth for the Toyota World Match Play Championship this week expecting to be the second seed in this 12-man event. He was wrong. When the draw for the event, which starts tomorrow, was announced, Mickelson found that he was seeded fifth.

Mickelson had no dispute with Ernie Els being named the top seed — Els has won this event for the past three years. Indeed, he has not yet lost a match. Mickelson was not concerned that Colin Montgomerie should be the No 3 seed nor Nick Price the No 4 seed. Montgomerie and Price are, respectively, No 5 and No 4 in the world rankings. Mickelson was surprised, however, that he, ranked No 10 in the world, was not seeded above Steve Elkington, ranked No 13. Elkington, who won the Players' Championship in March earlier this year, is seeded No 2 at Wentworth.

Mickelson thought that the seedings were done on the basis of the world rankings, as he was led to believe had happened last year. On that basis he assumed that, like the other seeds, he would not be playing until the second round on Friday and had intended to go sightseeing in London yesterday. But when he discovered that Elkington was seeded No 2 and he was No 5,

FIRST ROUND

Seeded players first (rounding off brackets)
0845 and 1300: J Parnell (Sct, 6) v I Watson (Sct, 11)
0900 and 1315: P Mickelson (US, 5) v F Nobilo (NZ)
0915 and 1330: B Penson (US, 6) v D Clarke (GB)
0930 and 1345: V Singh (Pak, 7) v T Watkinson (Japan)
0945 and 1400: S Elkington (Pak, 2)

it meant that he was playing tomorrow and he had to forgo his trip to London in order to get 36 holes practice.

Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that Elkington is a client of the International Management Group (IMG), the tournament's organisers, while Mickelson is not. "I am not surprised they would try and get one of their clients a



Mickelson: unhappy with his tournament seeding

seed," Mickelson said. "If I were a client I would hope they would do everything for me. But they changed it from the world rankings." Defending the decision of the tournament organisers, Mark McCormack, the head of IMG, said: "The Players' Championship is the fifth most important title after the four major championships." Reflecting on the Ryder Cup, Mickelson named two reasons why Europe had won — superior putting and better teamwork. "We did not make as many putts as we needed to," Mickelson said. "The Europeans played better golf. They made the crucial shots when they had to. There was a time on Sunday when looking up at the board we noticed there was as much red as we needed (to win) but in a couple of minutes we were not able to sustain it. It was crucial for us to win the first five or six matches and when we split the first five 2-1 points each, that was where we got hurt."

Tom Kite, the United States captain, has come in for some criticism at home and Mickelson, like Tom Lehman, his team-mate, who was competing in Germany last week, thought that this was unfair. "Tom [Kite] did a great job," Mickelson said. "He has been on a number of these teams and he knows what players like and don't like. He turned out to be very consistent. It made it a lot easier for the guys to play. It is disappointing that we did not play well for him because he deserved that."

Snooker turns to Archer

BY PHIL YATES

LORD ARCHER of Weston-super-Mare is to be named as President of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA) at a press conference at the House of Commons tomorrow afternoon. Before that gathering, an extraordinary general meeting of the game's governing body is expected to ratify an amendment to the WPBSA constitution that will allow its president to be appointed by the board of directors instead of being elected by members.

Despite continuing to host extremely healthy television audiences — ten million viewers were attracted for the concluding session of the Benson and Hedges Masters final in February, when Steve Davis defeated Ronnie O'Sullivan — sponsorship has become a growing concern. The Grand Prix is one of a number of unsponsored tournaments this season and those influential within the game believe that having a high-profile political figure in their corner will help, either directly or indirectly, to strengthen its commercial position.

Lord Archer, a former chairman of the Conservative Party, will fill the position vacated in the early 1990s by Ray Reardon, six times the world professional snooker champion between 1969 and 1978. It has not been filled until now and this is the first time that the WPBSA has broken with tradition and decided to offer the post to someone outside snooker.

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'The doctors have told me I'm going to die'

PAGE 18

BEST FOR BOOKS

Claire Bloom on Joan Sutherland
PLUS Hardy Amies on peacock males
PAGES 38, 39

ME AND MY OPERATION

Dr Stuttaford reports from his hospital bed

PAGE 19

BEST FOR JOBS

WANTED
Sales 125K
Managers 120K
Marketing 70K
Executives 100K
32 PAGES IN TWO SECTIONS

Hague aides deny EMU policy shift

Rank and file vent wrath on Tory MPs

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Tory rank and file rose in revolt yesterday as they vented their fury on seaze and disloyalty in the parliamentary party, demanded a bigger say in leadership elections and called for more powers to throw out errant MPs.

The anger of Tory workers at the way years of splits and scandals had contributed to the worst defeat in Conservative history exploded at the Blackpool conference in a highly charged three-hour debate on the party's future.

The contempt of the grassroots for the antics of rebellious Tory MPs boiled over when Sir Archibald Hamilton, chairman of the 1922 Committee, was jeered as he said that MPs must keep the main say in electing party leaders.

Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, in contrast, was cheered when he called for members to have a 50 per cent say in the leadership election, far more than the hierarchy intends. Catching the mood, he told trouble-makers that if they could not stop quarrelling, they should "shove off and join another party".

There was unity behind the demand for reform, but dissatisfaction that the plans put forward this week did not yet go far enough.

But even as activists unleashed attack after attack on MPs for the way they had misruled his predecessor, William Hague was facing new claims of confusion after apparently softening the Conservatives' policy on the European single currency.

Shadow Cabinet opposition appeared to have forced a shift from the firm line that he took during the leadership election when he said that he would rule out the single currency for the lifetime of the next Parliament, effectively for ten years.

When an attempt was made last week to turn that into shadow cabinet policy, some shadow ministers objected that it would be too rigid a line to take in the fast-changing circumstances surrounding EMU. Under an emergency formula agreed to maintain



"There are signs of unity emerging — we all agree we fancy Eylon"

unity this week, all shadow cabinet members yesterday were ruling out single currency membership "for the foreseeable future". As proposed, the policy had been softened in a compromise designed to keep the party together. Eurosceptic ministers insisted that the "foreseeable future" still meant ten years.

Although the wording appears to represent a shift, Mr Hague's aides denied that it did, adding that his own opposition to membership within ten years remained. They said that as the policy would go to party members for a vote, Mr Hague could not pre-empt their decision by excluding EMU membership in the next Parliament.

The only certainty was that the policy was again in a muddle and will be reconsidered when the conference ends. The divisions continued on the conference fringe last night, with Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, saying that there was no point in having a Conservative Party if it did not fight against the single currency. But Sir Leon Brittan, the European Commissioner, said that to condemn EMU before it had started would be to "ensnare the Conservative Party in a trap of political irrelevance".

Back in the conference hall,

Lord Parkinson, the party chairman, brought the party reform debate, which a times seemed to be a display of ritual blood-letting, to an end with a pledge that the party grassroots would get "real power".

He admitted that the party had seemed out of touch and to have lost its direction and unity of purpose. He said that that must not be allowed to happen again and, by changing the party's structure and organisation, Conservatives would win again. He said: "It is going to be your party — not Smith Square's poodle, not the preserve of the National Union, not the parliamentary party's plaything."

The new single Conservative Party will belong to its members — all its members. We will all have a say. We will all have a part to play.

Party leaders were hoping that the debate would prove a catharsis and that, with the recriminations over the party could move on to the future. But they were taken aback by the emotion shown. Marjorie Simpson, from Stockton South, was typical. She attacked MPs who, she said, had "colluded with the enemy", adding: "They were selfish, cowardly people who delivered this nation into the hands of Mr Blair."

Jonathan Marland, from Salisbury, said that a once great party had become "decadent with seaze", had feuded openly with itself and turned viciously on its leaders. MPs had lost the respect of the electorate with their "self-centred arrogance". Sir James Gillingham, who lost his Gillingham seat on May 1, drew applause when he told the conference: "If only some of my erstwhile colleagues, when confronted by their behaviour, had thought more about the party and less about themselves."

Matthew Parris, page 2
Conference, pages 8 and 9
William Rees-Mogg and Magnus Linklater, page 20
Leading Article and Letters, page 21



Jane Noble speaking last night. She said her husband, a casualty doctor, was depressed

Wife pleads for missing doctor to return home

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE wife of an "overstressed" senior hospital registrar last night made an impassioned appeal for him to return home after his empty car was found beside the sea.

Matthew Choyce, 34, was last seen in the early hours of Tuesday by his wife, Jane Noble, who is also a doctor, at their Newcastle upon Tyne home. She said he was depressed and stressed at his job in the casualty department at Sunderland Royal Hospital.

At a press conference last night Dr Noble, 30, said: "Matthew, I want you to know I love you very much. Me, your family and friends are really worried about you. Whatever problems you are thinking about, we will sort



Choyce disappeared early on Tuesday

them out together... Please get in touch. Please just come back to us."

Her husband's car was found at midday on Tuesday at Tynemouth, in North

Tyneside, outside the Park Hotel, overlooking the North Sea. A search of the surrounding area found nothing. Yesterday a police helicopter was called in. Dr Noble said: "I woke at about 4am on Tuesday and went to get a drink of water and Matthew was in bed. By 7am he had gone. He took the car but he has no money or clothes other than what I think he was wearing when he left."

The couple, both Oxford graduates, married two years ago. Dr Noble is a researcher at the University of Newcastle working one day a week at the city's Freeman Hospital. They moved to the North East from Essex in 1992. Dr Choyce, who only started in Sunderland last month, had been depressed for three weeks.

World changes too fast for us older ones says the Queen

By CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN ISLAMABAD AND ALAN HAMILTON

THE QUEEN let slip a rare intimation of mortality yesterday when she confessed that the world was changing too fast for people of her age to keep up.

Addressing the Pakistani Senate and National Assembly in Islamabad on her state visit to mark half a century of independence on the Indian sub-continent the Queen, 71 last April, was referring to the need for a younger generation to take up the cause of Anglo-Pakistani relations.

Her remark was an unusual personal reflection on the fact that she came to the throne in 1952, and is now the fifth-longest serving English monarch since the Norman Conquest.

The Queen, who celebrates her fiftieth wedding anniversary next month, told her audience: "I sometimes sense the world is changing almost too fast for us older ones. It is the younger generation who must lead the way in fostering our friendship."

In case anyone thought that she was hinting at her retirement at the end of five particularly difficult years for the monarchy, the Queen made it clear that her references were to young people in general, and not to her own troubled family. Her theme was cultural ties between Britain and Pakistan, and the growth of a distinctive new identity, the British Muslim.

The Queen said that British and Pakistani cultures complemented each other "in ways that might surprise us". A distinctive new identity, that of British Muslim, has emerged, she said, and she welcomed it. Those ties would have to be continued by younger

people. The Queen said: "People like the youngsters from Bradford, for whom being British and Pakistani is a way of life; like your outstanding cricketers playing for both English counties and the Pakistani national team; like our young parliamentarians, learning from each other; like our young soldiers, sharing UN duties in war-torn areas around the world."

The Queen also urged Pakistan and India to "renew efforts to end historic disagreements," amounting to a direct appeal to find a solution to the 50-year-old dispute over Kashmir. She was answered hours afterwards by young Pakistanis chanting "we want Kashmir" and banners proclaiming "Kashmir bleeds".

The third day of her state visit with the Duke of Edinburgh finally took the couple away from the sombre atmosphere of the nation's small capital city to neighbouring Rawalpindi to meet the Pakistani and South African cricket teams, who are playing a five-day Test match. Before she arrived, hundreds of spectators chanted slogans demanding freedom for Indian Kashmir.

The Queen met the players on the pitch, to roars of approval from thousands of people in the stands, while demonstrators gathered outside with anti-Indian banners.

The Queen's comments on Kashmir came as Indian officials reacted angrily to a reported statement by Derek Fatchett, a Foreign Office minister, that he backed a referendum to determine the future of Kashmir. India has consistently rejected the idea.

Cricket report, page 46

Vichy trial

Maurice Papon, the retired civil servant on trial for deporting hundreds of Jews to Nazi death camps, confronted his accusers across a French courtroom yesterday...Page 13

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Cheap, fast mains Internet

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

CONSUMERS have been promised an Internet revolution providing faster and cheaper access to the World Wide Web down ordinary domestic electricity lines.

Two companies, Northern Telecom and Norweb Communications, said they had found the "holy grail" of telecommunications — the ability to send vast amounts of data along power lines without its being distorted by interference. In future, every home in the country could be connected to the Internet in this way, providing increasing competition for telephone companies, especially BT.

Nortel, a Canadian telecommunications equipment manufacturer, has developed the

technology at its main European research laboratories at Harlow, Essex, in co-operation with Norweb Communications, part of United Utilities, which operates electricity, gas and telecommunications businesses in Britain.

Norweb intends to offer a commercial trial to 2,000 homes in the North West next Spring. The system will then spread outwards from there. The two companies said yesterday that their service could offer an Internet connection 20 to 30 times faster than commonly available through today's telephone modems and that the cost would be lower by up to 50 per cent.

Peter Dudley, a vice president of Nortel, said users

would be able to remain permanently online, paying a flat monthly charge with their electricity bills. Ian Vance, Nortel's chief scientist, said: "It can do everything the Internet can do without any of the constraints of speed."

The system works by using either fibre-optic or radio links to transmit data from the Internet to local electricity substations. The low-voltage part of the electricity network then becomes a local area network. A small box is installed next to the electricity meter in the home to send and receive data. The box itself is connected by ordinary cable to PCs, which will need to be fitted with a special card and software costing less than £200.

Chief Justice urges debate on cannabis

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE most senior judge in England and Wales yesterday backed calls for a public debate on the legalisation of soft drugs such as cannabis.

Just days after Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, ruled out moves to legalise cannabis, the Lord Chief Justice said the issue merited consideration. Lord Bingham of Cornhill made clear that he was not expressing a personal view on decriminalisation of soft drugs. But he said: "It is a subject that deserves, in my judgment, detached, objective, independent consideration."

He also welcomed the recent decision by the independent

Police Foundation to have an inquiry into the law on the misuse of drugs.

Last night a spokesman for the Home Office reiterated Mr Straw's comments that decriminalising cannabis would only encourage its use. The spokesman added, however, that the Government was happy to debate the issue.

But the comments were welcomed by Bill Saulsbury, secretary of the Police Foundation and Paul Cavadino, principal officer of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders.

Privacy laws, page 7

Italians turn evil eye on England soccer thugs

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ITALIAN police raised the alarm over football violence yesterday, four days ahead of England's World Cup qualifying match in Rome. Newspapers also accused England of mobilising "its most terrifying weapon: the football hooligan".

The police union said it was concerned by reports of an invasion of thugs who had evaded measures to

keep them away, and called on the authorities to "change the rules so that our police can use rubber bullets, as happens in France and the United States". It said the police "need rubber bullets to deter those who are going to the stadium looking for a fight rather than to watch the match peacefully".

"This is not only the match of the year, it is the match of the next four years", said *Il Messaggero* in a front page editorial. "For the loser, it will be

football suicide. The English know it, the Italians know it, and they are both trying to improve their chances by fair means or foul, whatever the cost."

The paper said the English were sending "their most feared representatives — their hooligans". All the Italians could do in reply was "to invoke superstitious curses" — a reference to the corna, or "devil's horns", a gesture made by holding up the little finger and forefinger and

holding the middle fingers down. Cesare Maldini, Italy's manager, made the sign this week when asked what he would do if Italy lost. "The English will have a good laugh at our expense over that," *Il Messaggero* said. "They send thugs, and we fall back on warding off the evil eye."

As the England team arrived in Rome last night, the Italian Council of Football Leagues met police to discuss preventing violence.

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A scary ride on Inspector Clouseau's ghost train

Readers who have yet to ride the Ghost Train at Blackpool's Pleasure Beach have missed a grisly experience. Skeletons leap out at you: corpses rise from their coffins: pools of blood lie to either side: vampires exhale their clammy breath in your face, and cobwebs tangle in your hair.

A speech by Michael Howard is like this, but scarier. I sampled the Shadow Foreign Secretary yesterday morning and the Ghost Train in the afternoon. Nothing the Ghost Train could contrive brought quite the same tingling up the back of the neck. The Ghost Train cost £160p; the speech

was free. You can shudder without charge at a Tory conference.

When the chairman called him, the impeccably tailored Mr Howard almost ran down on to the speaker's platform, a slim figure in a near-black suit. "Our foreign affairs team is first class," he hissed. A shriek of "there's me, for instance" followed by a manic cackle should have come next, but Mr Howard was too modest. There followed a stinging tribute to Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan.

And it was during this that a curious feature of the Shadow Foreign Secretary's speaking style first struck me. He



MATTHEW PARRIS
CONFERENCE SKETCH

referred to "the curled War". Mr Howard has almost conquered his problems with pronouncing "people" (pipul) and "principles" (principuels), but now seems to have fallen into new difficulties.

Those vowels which require a dilated O from the lips get a puckered O instead. To produce the Howard sound, try saying "golden" with your mouth arranged for the silent transmission by windpower of a spitball of blotting-paper

at a classroom enemy, when the teacher isn't looking. The result is reminiscent of the late Peter Sellers's Inspector Clouseau, asking an organ grinder if he had a licence for his muerkey.

The Shadow Foreign Secretary praised Mrs Thatcher and her successors for the "gueriden inheritance" they had left "a gueriden legacy". Now Robin Cook pranced around "the wuerid", as though he had created it. How

dare Cook parade the wuerid stage squandering the gueriden legacy from Britain's buried stance in the Curled War? Tuerney Blair was just as phuerney.

Mr Howard's other idiosyncrasy is to flatter previous speakers from the floor by introducing their names into the text of his own speech. Unfortunately, that text is already printed and pre-released. The result is rather like those computer-personalised malishos: "Have you ever wondered, Mr Parris, how much money double-glazing could have saved you and Mrs Parris this year?"

Howard's pre-released text read "Take the Social Chapter. It will destroy jobs." But what he actually said was "Take the Suersthal Chapter. How right Amy-Louise Barnes was to remind us that it will destroy jobs".

One wonders how Churchill might have coped. "Never in the field of human conflict, as Amy-Louise Barnes reminds us, has so much been owed by so many to so few?"

Only once did Mr Howard depart substantially from his text. At the end of his speech he was (as media-speak jargon now has it) "expected to say" that Tony Blair has made three promises — and to list

these, concluding "the people must have the final say". Instead, suffering a momentary relapse with his "people", the Shadow Foreign Secretary declared "the pipul must have the final say" and then (unscripted) cried: "We shall huerid yew to that final pruermiss."

Mr Howard left the podium to a standing ovation from the audience, prolonged applause from the platform party, and a degree of consternation (as Amy-Louise Barnes might have put it — and how right she would have been) on all sides.

Tory conference, pages 8, 9

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dublin replaces minister

David Andrews has been appointed Irish Foreign Minister in place of Ray Burke, who resigned earlier this week.

Mr Andrews, 62, formerly Defence Minister, assumes the co-chairmanship of the talks on Northern Ireland with Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary. A senior member of the Irish Bar, he is seen by officials in Dublin and London as a safe pair of hands, and his moderate views should be acceptable to Unionists. Mr Burke resigned after allegations of procedural breaches concerning passports and his admission of a political donation from a builder.

Prison deaths

Sir Peter Woodhead, the Prison Ombudsman, is asking ministers for powers to investigate deaths in custody amid concern that suicides and natural fatalities are not being properly examined. The issue will be discussed with the Home Office next week.

Poet's £10,000

Jamie McDermid has won the 1997 Forward Prize for the best poetry collection with *The Marble Fly*. Robin Robertson won the £5,000 prize for a best first collection with *A Painted Field*, and Lavinia Greenlaw the £1,000 prize for the best single poem.

Crime drive

A £200,000 pilot scheme for more than 100 underprivileged children was launched by Sandwell Borough Council, Birmingham, to keep them off the streets. A councillor said: "Tiger Woods is their cult hero and they all want to be like him."

Art giveaway

The Scottish Arts Council is giving away its entire £2-million collection of 2,000 Scottish art works to galleries and museums. Magnus Linklater, the council chairman, said the public would be better served if the paintings, photographs and sculpture were dispersed.

Media doubts

Tony Blair's "task force" met for the first time yesterday with a mission to discover whether education is failing to prepare students for creative work and expressed concern over whether courses in media and studies properly equipped graduates.

In-flight violence

A woman has been jailed for two years for kicking a policeman in the groin after a fracas on a transatlantic flight. The judge, at Isleworth Crown Court, told Carmel Beer, 30, of Stratford-on-Avon, Somerset, that she had acted like the worst football hooligan.

Jury trial may be dropped for complex frauds

By Stewart Tandler and Francis Gibb

TRIAL by jury for complex fraud cases may be ended as part of an attack on City swindles and money-laundering being prepared by the Government.

Expensive fraud cases could come to court much more quickly, take far less time and be held before a judge with expertise in financial matters and advised by a group of City elders.

Another proposal is to remove the legal restraints on the Inland Revenue passing confidential information to the police. Other plans include increasing police powers to seize cash from suspects, widening the controls on financial institutions exploited by money launderers, and tougher laws on unscrupulous lawyers and financial advisers who turn a blind eye to laundering.

Helen Liddell, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, will publicly raise the possibility today of ending the jury system for some fraud cases when she makes a wide-ranging speech to police fraud investigators. Assuring her audience that the "Government mean business on financial crime", she will outline proposals being prepared by

her department, the Home Office, the Lord Chancellor's Department and the Attorney-General's office.

She will tell the investigators that new financial regulators will watch over City institutions but the criminal justice system also needs to be modernised.

"A City free of regulatory abuse but open to fraud, corruption and money laundering is not one that will survive and grow in the current international climate."

The failure of prominent fraud cases in recent years has raised increasing criticism of the way in which serious and complex cases are handled. Many commentators have questioned whether such cases should go before a jury.

The minister will tell the conference: "I believe that we need to examine alternatives to trial by jury for these sorts of cases to see whether it might not be possible to develop a more tailored approach which could still command public confidence."

She will say that proposals now being discussed include greater sharing of financial information among investigators both in Britain and

abroad. There will be action to plug loopholes exploited by money launderers. There is concern that small bureaux de change and agencies which wire cash have no regulating body.

Mrs Liddell she will raise the possibility of moving towards a national fraud squad, possibly linked to the national crime squad which begins work next year.

The law on money laundering may be changed to make sure that professional advisers such as lawyers and accountants cannot turn a blind eye to dubious dealings or financial plans. Police could get extra powers for records to be produced and new confiscation orders allowing investigators to seize suspicious cash in transit in and out of Britain. At the moment only suspected drug assets can be held.

Yesterday officials confirmed that changing the system of jury trial was being treated in the Treasury as a serious proposition. It follows growing concern dating from the early 1980s. Police and prosecutors argue that juries can no longer cope with sophisticated cases which may take months or years to complete.



Ian Findlay examines a sample: he says they might even solve crimes as old as the Jack the Ripper murders

Dandruff – the detective's friend

Nick Nuttall on a breakthrough in police work with DNA

A FLECK of dandruff, a licked stamp or a smudged fingerprint on a car key could soon be used by scientists to catch and convict criminals. Researchers have developed a method of DNA fingerprinting which will work with a single human cell.

The breakthrough, made by a team at Leeds University and the Forensic Science Service in Birmingham, means for the first time that the tiniest sample left at the scene of a crime may be sufficient to

bring a culprit to justice. The technique could also help pinpoint rapists in a multiple rape case based on individual sperm collected from a swab. It can also tell the sex of the person from a single cell.

Ian Findlay, of the department of molecular oncology at Leeds and one of the researchers involved, said yesterday: "It is possible to conceive of there being no scientific barrier to the detection of crime. This is the breakthrough we have been waiting for."

He said the research might also be applied to try to solve old crimes such as those committed by Jack the Ripper. Mr Findlay said it depended on how well the DNA in the old cells had survived on, say, an old gun, shirt or other exhibit.

"You may be able to go back even further, but not probably

as far as 500 years. In the end we will only know when we see the old sample," he said.

The breakthrough, made with funding from the Medical Research Council, is reported in *Nature*. Currently, millions of cells are needed in a sample to do a DNA profiling or fingerprinting test. The Leeds and Birmingham team have developed a system known as short-tandem repeat profiling to produce accurate and reliable results from a single cell in a few hours.

The method, partly made possible by developments in gene sequencing technology, tries to identify six "microsatellite" markers in a sample reflecting the DNA's six chromosomes. The chances of cell samples from two people producing an identical result, using the

technique, are claimed to be 100 million to one.

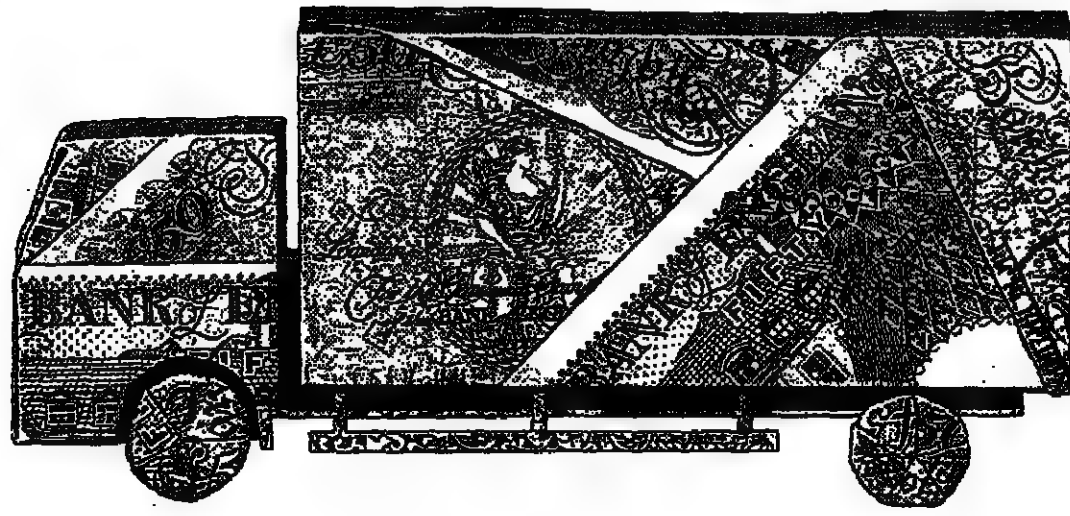
Phil Quirke, another member of the team, said that they were able to pinpoint the six markers in half of all cells. Four of the markers, the level acceptable in a British court, are identified in 14 per cent of tests. It means that the technique so far works to British court standards, in 64 per cent of tests.

Recently an Australian team reported that they could get DNA profiles from pers and car keys. But their method needs a minimum of 200 cells to work, and identifies only one of the six markers. The British team is convinced that, with proper development funding, they can perfect the system and have it in place for the forensic service in two years. But Mr Quirke said even pinpointing one of the markers on the DNA can be useful to the police if it differs to one on the DNA of a suspect. "It means you can release him."

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Checks to beat exam cheats

By John O'Leary, Education Editor

SCHOOLS will face spot-checks next spring to ensure that they are complying with tough new rules, published yesterday, to eliminate cheating in national curriculum tests.

One head teacher resigned and four schools were reported to their local education authorities after 35 cases of apparent cheating in this year's tests were investigated by examination boards. In at least one case, children were disqualified and others had their marks reduced.

Almost half of the schools investigated this summer were cleared of malpractice. The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority decided that there was insufficient evidence to proceed in 13 further cases.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the successor to the assessment authority, said: "There is no evidence of widespread cheating, but we want to make it publicly transparent that there

is strict supervision." Estelle Morris, the Education Minister, said the new measures would ensure that parents and teachers could have confidence in the results. "We regard the integrity of the tests as paramount and it is essential that the tests are fair to all."

Question papers will be delivered to schools within a week of the tests taking place, rather than up to three weeks ahead, and must not be opened until an hour before needed. Head teachers will be required to sign declarations that tests have been administered fairly. Local authority officials or Government advisers will carry out spot-checks before, during and after tests. Teachers' leaders said they regretted that action was necessary to deal with a tiny minority of cases. Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "The fact that the Government has seen fit to act indicates the impossible high stakes attached to the tests."

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Almighty row a

Can-Do Girls owe it all to daddy

Teenagers believe they are better than the next man

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

GIRLS with a positive attitude owe their self-confidence to their fathers, research from Oxford University disclosed yesterday.

Fathers who listen to their daughters and allow them to be themselves, rather than constantly criticise and correct, lie behind an explosion of "girl power", researchers said.

A new generation of "Can-Do Girls", whose strength of character came from strong relationships with their parents, was identified by the research. One teenage girl in five believes the world is at her feet and that she will compete with men on equal terms for top jobs.

However, one in 12 girls was identified as a "Low Can-Do Girl", starved of family support, who thinks that life is unfair to women and does not expect to succeed.

Adrianne Katz, author of *The Can-Do Girls* report published yesterday, said: "It seems that, for a lot of girls, their father plays a huge role in their self-esteem. Fathers represent the outside world and, maybe because the girls will have to compete with men, if he values their opinions, girls seem to take extra strength from that. Girls want their father's approval quite badly."

Girls' outlook was also affected by the behaviour of their fathers at home. While nine out of ten Can-Do Girls agreed "things are fairer for women nowadays", fewer than one in six Low Can-Do Girls agreed.

Mrs Katz said: "The father needs to do more than say, 'I am here for you.' He needs to exemplify a way of treating women. If the mother is badly treated by the father, a girl appears to lose confidence in herself and her future."

The researchers questioned 3,000 young women aged 13 to 19 and identified 638 as super-confident Can-Do girls. They were the ones who agreed,

strongly with four questions or statements: do you feel happy and confident, there are exciting opportunities for me, I get on with my work at school, and do you always set yourself high standards?

More than 2,000 of the girls fell into the middle category but were still "jolly confident", Mrs Katz said. She added: "Most young women in the UK feel confident and happy much of the time."

Family relationships were shown to be the most significant factor behind a girl's self-confidence, with no significant influence registered by other indicators such as poverty, area of the country or social class.

However, 50 per cent of the Can-Do girls admitted to worrying about being fat, although this compared with 67 per cent of girls overall and about 70 per cent of Low Can-Do girls.

Mrs Katz added: "Girls believe the future is theirs. An extraordinary web of youth culture and a club of 'girlhood' - girl power, to coin a current phrase - is inspiring and empowering young women as never before. They believe that they are as good as or better than the next man. Gone is the concept of competition with men, or whingeing about unfairness. Girls can do - and are doing - in ever-increasing numbers."

Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop, which sponsored the research, said: "No one has ever said growing up is easy, but this research tells us something new. It introduces us to the Can-Do girls, young women who are willing - and able - to take life by the horns and live it to the full."

Publication of the report coincided with the launch of a "self-esteem activity pack" which has been put together by The Body Shop and the Guide Association to help girls to build up their self-confidence.



Cara Barry, Polly Spencer, Laura Jones and Amy Barry: "The Spice Girls just wear as little clothing as possible and say that's powerful"

Power, not pop, is the spice of life

Family and friends are better role models for young than chart-topping wannabes, writes David Charter

GIRL POWER pre-dates the Spice Girls. The new generation of ambitious, super-confident young women identified yesterday were researched before the girl band entered the nation's consciousness with their ebullient catchphrase.

In fact, teenage girls who took part in the research were scathing in their criticism of the Spice Girls for claiming to represent their generation. The Can-Do Girls' most important role models were their mothers and their friends.

"The Spice Girls are not about Girl Power. How many men in suits own them?" asked Polly Spencer, 17, a

student at Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School in Barnet, North London. "I don't look up to pop stars or celebrities. I admire people who change something or who make something of themselves. My friends are my biggest role models because they are the people who respect me and let me be an individual."

Cara Barry, 14, also from Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School, who also took part in the research project and identified herself as a Can-Do Girl, added: "I don't like the

Spice Girls because they pretend to be something they are not. They say they are the leaders of Girl Power but they don't represent us. They just wear as little clothing as possible and say that's powerful. They don't seem to care about women's rights. My mum and my sister are my role models."

The girls agreed that their own route to girl power would be through higher education. For them, the future holds the challenge of succeeding without men writing

the script. "I don't think the sexes are completely equal yet and I don't see why men should be the dominant sex and women should be left behind," Cara said. "I want to have a career and I don't want to have children until I am in my thirties. There is so much I want to do without having to feel I have got another person to put before myself." Polly added: "I really want to go to art college. I don't want to rely on someone else."

Adrianne Katz, the re-

searcher, said her findings proved that the Spice Girls were a symptom of Girl Power, not the cause. "We carried out our survey in September last year just before the emergence of the Spice Girls," she said. "We did not intend to study particularly confident girls, but we could not ignore the confident optimism that seemed to be leaping off the page."

Laura Jones, 14, who also took part in the research, said: "I think the Spice Girls are using the idea of 'girl power' just to make money. I admire women MPs such as Mo Mowlam, because before it was a man in Northern Ireland."

Parents lose court plea over negligence hearing

By IAN MURRAY MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A DISCIPLINARY hearing into accusations against three doctors will start on Monday after the High Court ruled that the parents of four brain-damaged children had no right to be represented there.

The case, to be heard by the General Medical Council's disciplinary committee, is expected to last well into the new year. Mr Justice Lightman, dismissing the parents' request to be represented at it, said the proceedings would be "immense, important and lengthy".

The three doctors are accused of professional misconduct in the way open-heart surgery was carried out at Bristol Royal Infirmary on the children, aged between three and nine, who were left severely brain damaged.

The parents, who say their children were the subject of negligent treatment, demanded the right to legal representation at the GMC hearing. They wanted an order requiring the Council to provide particulars of the allegations of serious misconduct made against the doctors and an injunction to prevent the inquiry proceeding before the documentation they required had been provided.

The families were concerned that the charges and evidence might be too narrowly circumscribed by the GMC and the conduct of the inquiry might unduly limit the issues to be investigated.

Mr Justice Lightman said it was in the public interest the case went ahead as soon as possible and the parents had no right to representation.

The problems of finding a new date suitable for all involved would be mammoth and cause considerable wasted costs, he said, as well as prolonging the ordeal of the doctors involved.

The parents, who are launching parallel claims for compensation against the hospital managers, the United Bristol NHS Healthcare Trust, will be able to attend the hearing as members of the public. One of them is to be called to give evidence.

Injuries not accidental doctor tells nanny trial

FROM PETER BEAL IN BOSTON

INJURIES suffered by a nine-month-old boy whose nanny Louise Woodward is accused of murdering could not have been caused accidentally, a neurosurgeon told an American court yesterday.

Joseph Medson said a gentle shaking or a fall on to towels on a bathroom floor, as Miss Woodward is alleged to have told police happened, could not have caused the irreversible brain damage from which Matthew Eappen died five days later.

Gerry Leone, the prosecutor, asked Dr Medson on the second day of Miss Woodward's trial at the Middlesex Superior Court in Cambridge, Massachusetts: "In your opinion, was the cause of these injuries accidental or non-accidental?"

Dr Medson replied: "I think they were non-accidental. To explain the injuries it would have required a forcible hitting of the head against some blunt surface. To explain the haemorrhaging there would have to be an additional shaking or swinging of the head in some fashion."

Miss Woodward, 19, of Elton, near Chester, denies murdering the baby in what the prosecution allege was a "frustrated, unhappy and resentful" rage because he would not stop crying and because she was unhappy with her job with Matthew's doctor parents. She faces a life

sentence without parole if convicted.

Dr Medson said he also ruled out the brain damage being caused by a developing, existing condition. He estimated the injuries had been caused between one to three hours before his admission to hospital.

"He said after suffering such injuries Matthew would have appeared lethargic, sleepy, would have probably been vomiting, have lost his appetite and appeared generally abnormal. The defence claims that the baby was showing these signs during the whole day and had appeared not his normal self the previous day. Barry Scheck, for the defence, asked Dr Medson if he was



Louise Woodward sits in the court yesterday

aware of notes made by Matthew's mother Dr Deborah Eappen that day from what Miss Woodward had told her about Matthew's behaviour first thing in the morning. Dr Medson said: "I am not aware of any notes written by Dr Eappen."

Mr Scheck told the court: "I have copies of those notes." Dr Medson said it was procedure at the hospital for doctors to contact police over injuries suggesting possible child abuse. He admitted it had been an "awkward and very difficult" situation because he knew at the time of the baby's admission that his parents were both doctors in Boston hospitals.

Mr Scheck asked: "Would you agree that in this kind of situation there is a danger of losing objectivity?"

Dr Medson replied: "There may be in some cases. We try to exercise the best possible clinical judgments we can."

Mr Scheck asked if there had been a danger of making a "snap judgment" about the cause of Matthew's injuries. The doctor replied: "I support those judgments to this day."

Dr Medson said he had told police the day after Matthew was admitted his injuries were consistent with shaken infant syndrome. He did not recall saying the impact had been equivalent to a fall from a second or third floor balcony. The case continues.

Nun, 79, in hospital after she is mugged

AN ELDERLY nun is in hospital after she was thrown to the ground by a mugger while visiting sick parishioners. Sister Marie Leary, 79, suffered a broken hip and had to undergo surgery.

She was attacked as she got out of her car and was left lying in pain on the ground by a white youth who snatched her bag and escaped in a stolen car later found abandoned. Sister Marie, a member of the Sisters of Charity of St Paul, is recovering after an operation to put a pin in her fractured hip. Her condition was described yesterday as comfortable.

She works in the Roman Catholic parish of Our Lady and All Saints at Stourbridge, West Midlands and is based at St Joseph's Convent in the town. The Rev David McGough, the parish priest, said: "She is well-known locally, having worked tirelessly for the sick and elderly in the area for 15 years."

"It is awful that she has been subjected to this assault. A few years ago, it would have been unthinkable for anyone to mug a nun. But unfortunately, that is no longer the case."

Father McGough said that Sister Marie was a sister-teacher for 45 years, ending her career as head teacher of St Peter's Roman Catholic School at Leamington, Warwickshire.

Almighty row as God tries to park

By PAUL WILKINSON

AN ACTOR who plays God arrived late to prepare for Creation, after running into the more almighty power of a car park attendant.

But there was some disagreement yesterday over who was moving in the most mysterious way in the hours before a Royal Shakespeare Company production of *The Creation* at Newcastle upon Tyne University. David Ryall, who portrays the Almighty in the medieval mystery play, had been so angered by problems trying to find a place to park that he wrote to the city's local paper, complaining "I have found it very difficult to give the performances that the

city deserves due to the abuse and humiliation received at the hands of car-parking officials."

The problem began when Mr Ryall, 61, was allowed through a barrier to find a space to park when he went to the theatre early to do his warm-up exercises. He left his car with the engine running to see if anyone would make room.

He said: "I was suddenly confronted by a concrete giant of a parking attendant. He was shouting 'Get out, get out'. I went to pieces. One just doesn't expect that sort of thing."

"I got back in my car and started looking for a space but he insisted that I leave the area completely. I just did as I was told. In the end I was sitting at a

parking meter some way from the theatre. I was actually shaking. I had to walk to my room at the theatre and sit down for a while. I was very rattled. I had to carry a large part of the play feeling absolutely awful."

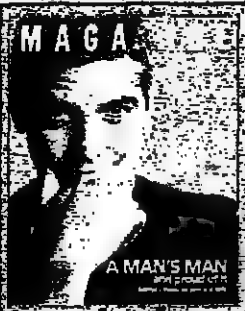
"Playing God hasn't given me any grandiose notions. I don't expect red-carpet treatment but surely some arrangement could be made to enable visiting actors to arrive at their place of work in a state of mind conducive to giving a performance."

However, a spokesman for the university, which owns the car park, dismissed the complaint about the staff. He said: "They are just a couple of little chaps sitting in a cabin."

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George Clooney
says
he'll never
marry



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Accomplices to Lawrence killing offered immunity

ACCOMPICES to the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence have been offered limited immunity, so that evidence they give before a public inquiry will not be used in any future criminal prosecutions against them.

Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, head of the judicial inquiry, said that both he and the public believed there were witnesses who had not yet come forward and he appealed for them to do so. An advertising campaign will be launched in the area around Eltham, southeast London, where the killing took place, to urge those people to tell their story to the inquiry.

Lawyers acting for the Lawrences suspect that the murderers may have been assisted in their escape, or in concealing the crime, by people who have not yet been traced.

Neville Lawrence, Stephen's father, said: "I am pleased to see that they have granted

**Lin Jenkins on
the opening of a
judicial inquiry
into the murder
of black teenager
at bus stop**

immunity to anybody would want to come forward and give evidence. Perhaps now we might get to the bottom of what happened."

Imran Khan, the family solicitor, added: "There has been a wall of silence around these particular matters, or that is what is claimed, and I hope that immunity offered by this inquiry will change that."

Police who conducted the investigation into the killing of the 18-year-old A-level student

at a bus stop in April 1993 complained that they received little co-operation.

Five white youths cleared of the murder declined to answer questions at an inquest into the death. The jury found that Stephen had been killed by a group of five white youths in an "unprovoked racist attack".

Sir William has the power to summons witnesses and is likely to call the youths. At a preliminary hearing yesterday, where interested parties made requests to be formally represented, there was no application on behalf of the five.

Sir William called for witnesses who had not yet been heard to come forward so he could consider all material for what he promised to be a "fair and full and fearless report".

He said that no evidence provided by any person to the inquiry, whether written or oral, or documents produced by that person, "will be used in evidence against him or her in



Sir William Macpherson of Cluny with one of his advisers, the Right Rev John Sentamu, Bishop of Stepney

any criminal proceedings, except in proceedings where he or she is charged with having given false evidence in the course of this inquiry, or having conspired with or procured others to do so".

The provision is a standard one under the statutory terms of a public inquiry and is

always outlined at the outset. It has been particularly useful in persuading people to give evidence in inquiries into widespread child abuse, and in the Scarman inquiry into the Brixton riots.

Sir William said: "Both I and the public believe that witnesses may be able to help

who have not so far come forward or been identified."

He will examine the actual killing, and the policing, investigation and legal proceedings that followed it. "I should stress that this inquiry does not involve litigation or claims made between parties. Nor will the inquiry be a trial or re-trial of any person or persons," he added.

He said he would consider applications for people to give evidence without their identity being disclosed. "We will always be prepared to hear any representation as to the need for confidentiality before making any decision to allow publicity. Anonymous information is unlikely to be relied upon."

The inquiry has been delayed until the outcome of a Police Complaints Authority (PCA) inquiry into complaints made by the Lawrence family against the Metropolitan Police.

Roland Phillips, for the authority, said it was anticipated the report would go to the Secretary of State at the end of November. "Very substantial progress has been made in several aspects." Any new lines opened up would be pursued.

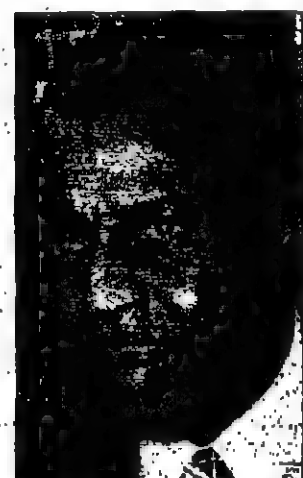
Sir William approved counsel to the inquiry to the Lawrence family, the Metropolitan Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Police Complaints Authority, the Council for Racial Equality, London Borough of Greenwich and Duane Brookes, the friend of Stephen who was with him at the time of his death.

Jane Deighton, his solicitor, said he needed to be represented since he had direct contact with those investigating the killing. "Many issues have arisen between him and those responsible, many of them hotly disputed. He has suffered severe trauma as a result of witnessing this murder and is himself emotionally vulnerable."

Sir William reserved judgement on whether to have ten



Stephen Lawrence, the murdered student



Neville Lawrence, Stephen's father, was pleased by offer

police officers represented by counsel for the Police Federation and three retired superintendents represented by counsel for the Police Superintendents' Association.

Sir William, a retired High Court judge, is assisted by three advisers: Tom Cook, former Deputy Chief Constable of West Yorkshire, the Right Rev John Sentamu, Bishop of Stepney, and Richard Stone, a North London GP and chairman of the Jewish Council for Racial Equality.

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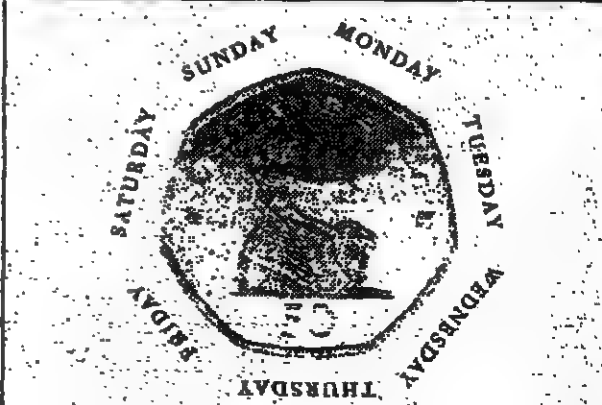
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Violent prison
threatened
kill hostage



The Be

Violent prisoner threatened to kill hostages

A PRISONER named Charles Bronson, who is described as Britain's most disruptive inmate, was jailed for a further seven years yesterday for taking three fellow prisoners hostage.

Bronson — who was known as Michael Gordon Peterson before adopting the name of the Hollywood actor — has spent 21 of the past 25 years in solitary confinement. The shaven-head Bronson, 44, accompanied by five officers in the dock, admitted demanding firearms, ammunition and a helicopter from a prison negotiator, and making three threats to kill. He had barricaded himself and three other prisoners, whom he tied up, in a cell for seven hours during a siege at the top-security Belmarsh prison, south London, in September 1996.

Bronson, 18st, had threatened to kill them unless he was given a helicopter, sub-machineguns, a cheese sandwich, and ice cream. Two of his hostages were Iraqis charged with hijacking an aeroplane while the third was a man now serving 15 years for shooting a police officer.

He demanded that the helicopter fly him to Cuba or Libya, where he would seek political asylum. Bronson

Inmate demanded helicopter, sub-machineguns and a sandwich, reports Paul Whittaker

warned prison officers that if his demands were not met within an hour, "you will have to bring in four bodyguards and four body bags."

"I have a blade and will cut them up. None of us are going to leave, even if it means me getting one in the head."

The Belmarsh prison siege was the latest in a series of hostage sieges and other violent incidents which have marked Bronson's prison career, the court was told. Bronson, who has been jailed three times for armed robberies, has six convictions for violence against inmates and is serving a 15-year sentence for possession of a firearm with intent and hostage-taking.

He was transferred to Belmarsh in 1996, where staff had put a great deal of effort

into his social development. Jeremy Donne, for the prosecution, told the Old Bailey. But Bronson "had a clear problem in getting on with other prisoners", he said.

"He is a large, strong man who keeps himself extremely fit and has been known to bend cell doors with his bare hands. Because of his strength and unpredictable behaviour and attitude to other prisoners, he has spent 21 of his last 25 years in segregated units — effectively in solitary confinement," Mr Donne told the court.

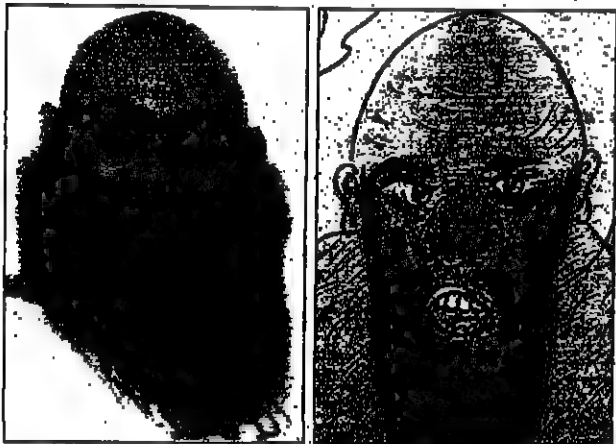
"He is considered probably the most disruptive inmate in this country."

Bronson, who holds a world record for press-ups and has won awards for his poetry and artwork, made a personal appeal to Judge Brian Watling. He told the judge that he had changed after being contacted by his son after many years. "My son, who I have not seen since 1975, is back in my life. Since I have had that letter I am on a mission of peace. I was on a mission of madness. All I want to do now is have a pint with my son. He is now 26 — he was three when I last saw him." Bronson plans to marry when his release date is up in 2010.

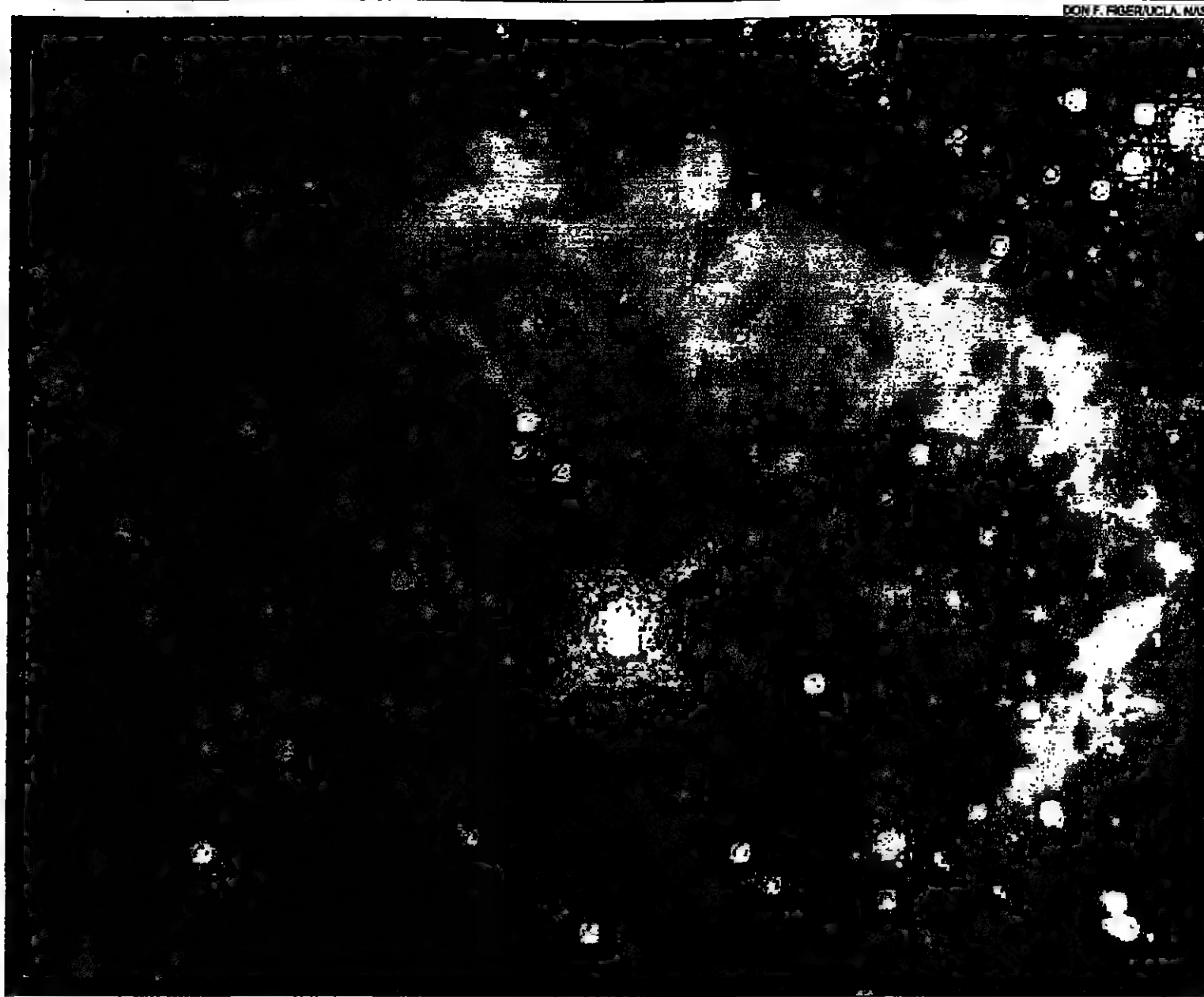
Isabella Forshaw, for the defence, described Bronson as a "warm" man who had written anti-drug pamphlets and raised £900 for a Yorkshire hospice by doing a "phenomenal" number of press-ups.

Judge Watling said that Bronson was "two people" — one who was "pleasant and warm" with a "potential to become good"; the other with a "capacity for great violence".

He told Bronson: "You are described as being one of the most violent prisoners in prison history. This was a very serious and very frightening incident. It illustrates the very difficult situation the Prison Service has in containing people like yourself."



Charles Bronson, who adopted the name of the actor, and a self-portrait. He also writes poetry



The Pistol Star captured by the Hubble Space Telescope. A nebula, produced by a violent eruption, appears as a pinkish cloud

Star born to live fast and die young

By ANJANA AHUJA

THE Hubble Space Telescope has revealed possibly the brightest star in the universe. However, the dazzling object is destined to remain hidden from human eyes — its radiant splendour is obscured by interstellar dust.

The star, which is ten million times as luminous as the Sun, was discovered by astronomers at the University of California at Los Angeles in mid-September. It was announced yesterday. It is the most dramatic finding yielded by the Near-Infrared Camera

and Multi-Object Spectrometer that was added to the telescope in February.

The discovery has been named the Pistol Star, after the shape of the gas cloud in which it resides. It lies 25,000 light years from Earth and has a radius of between 93 million and 139 million miles. One light year is about 5,900 billion miles. If placed at the centre of our solar system it would stretch to Mars.

In stellar terms, it is living fast and will die young — the Pistol Star releases as much energy in six seconds as the Sun does in a year, and

is likely to come to a spectacular, explosive end as a supernova within three million years.

Mark Morris, one of the researchers, said: "Massive stars such as the Pistol Star are burning their candles at both ends; they are so luminous that they consume their fuel at an outrageous rate, burning out quickly and often creating dramatic events, such as exploding as supernovas."

The researchers, who were led by Don Figer, also estimate that the star, born between one and three million years ago, may have started life as the largest star ever, with a mass 200

times that of the Sun. For this reason, the discovery is likely to renew debate about how stars form and evolve.

Astronomers believe that stars form within large dust clouds that contract under their own gravity. Portions of the clouds, or nebulae, shrink into hot clumps; eventually the core of the clump begins to burn hydrogen, the signature of star formation. The newly formed star then begins to radiate sufficient energy to counter the inward fall of material, thus limiting its maximum mass. Large stars — those more than 120 solar masses — are exceedingly rare.

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CHEVROLET

Man behind Roland Rat takes on the NHS

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE television executive who put Roland Rat on screen has been put in charge of drawing up a charter for the National Health Service.

Greg Dyke, who was chosen for the job by Tony Blair because of his experience as a communicator, has been asked to scrap the Patient's Charter and replace it with one that makes the public understand that it has responsibilities as well as rights.

"When I go to accident and emergency departments I am told that the growth in the number of assaults on nurses and abuse is related to people's crude understanding of what they think their rights are under the Patient's Charter," Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, said as he announced the review. "From what doctors and nurses tell us, the Patient's Charter is something that is making their lives not only more difficult, but dangerous as well."

One prototype of the charter the Government wants to

see has been drawn up by the health authority at Bury, Lancashire. It emphasises the need for patients to turn up on time for appointments, and also tells them not to wear dirty boots or park bicycles in surgery waiting rooms.

"Patients' rights will remain, but we want to get into the new charter commitments about the quality of care and not just things about the speed with which patients are seen."

JOBS FOR FRIENDS AND BACKERS

GREG DYKE is the latest in a line of businessmen and creative people who helped to bankroll Tony Blair's office in Opposition or supported Labour's election campaign who have received an honour or a government job since Mr Blair came to power.

Christopher Haskins, chairman of Northern Foods, named head of the Government's new Better Regulation taskforce, was introduced at the Labour

Mr Dobson said. "If there is a commitment to see someone within 15 minutes, patients must understand that if somebody is brought in needing immediate treatment to save their life then those who are not such urgent cases will just have to wait."

"People must understand as well that it does harm to other patients and to the health service itself if they fail to turn up for an appointment," He

conference as "our great friend". The film producer Lord Putnam has been appointed to Chris Smith's creative industries team and to David Blunkett's Standards in Schools taskforce.

Peetages were also given to Michael Levy, who helped to organise the "blind trust" which funded Mr Blair's private office, and to the prime minister's Ruth Rendell, who has given sums to the party.

said that no sanctions were being considered for those who missed appointments, but the aim of the new charter was to raise the public's awareness of the damage done by being inconsiderate. This was where Mr Dyke's expertise would come in.

Mr Dyke, 50, who worked as an executive with TV-am, TVS, London Weekend and GMTV before taking over as chairman and chief executive of Pearson Television two years ago, was a large contributor to Mr Blair's Labour leadership campaign and regularly donates money to the Labour Party. A member of a private health scheme paid by his employer, he said yesterday that he used to hire a physiotherapist after playing football.

During the next few months he will be consulting patients' groups and the medical profession to draw up the charter in time for the NHS's 50th anniversary in July.

Letters, page 21



Greg Dyke, left, and Frank Dobson yesterday: Mr Dyke has been chosen for his skill as a communicator

Fighting chance for hospitals facing closure

BY OUR MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

FOUR community hospitals threatened with closure to save £5 million may yet be saved.

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Health Authority says that it faces impossibly high costs because of the widely scattered population the hospitals serve. Stan Dennison, the authority's chairman, said that, unlike Scotland and Wales, which had a similar problem, Cornwall did not receive an extra 20 per cent in funding.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, said in London that there would have to be three months' consultation about the closures. "It does not necessarily follow that those hospitals will be closed just because it has been proposed," he said. "If the local community health councils object, at the end of that process the decision will then come to me, and I will have to take that decision."

Mr Dobson said that he could make no promises about extra funding for the NHS. But he repeated a promise by the Prime Minister at the weekend to keep a close eye on NHS finances.

The Cornish hospitals targeted for closure are Edward Hain in St Ives, Poltair in

Penzance, St Barnabas in Saltash and Povey hospital. If the closures go ahead, it will reduce the number of beds from 453 to 324 and cut 300 jobs. In anticipation of the closure, the authority has increased community nursing services so that some patients would not have to travel to hospital. It says that it will continue to press the Government for adequate funding.

Trevor Parsons, of the public service union Unison, said that he wanted an inquiry into the way the authority was managed. The cuts would go "right to the heart of the community", he said. "We intend to go directly to Mr Dobson, and will be launching petitions and demonstrations and doing our best to get these cuts reversed."

The Liberal Democrats, who hold four of Cornwall's five Commons seats, announced a three-month campaign to reverse the proposals. Matthew Taylor, the Truro and St Austell MP, blamed "years of government underfunding. Labour could not wash its hands of the problem by blaming the previous Government. They can take action to put things right."

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Law chief says privacy law will evolve in courts

Human rights convention will allow judges to build up rules based on individual cases, reports Frances Gibb

THE Lord Chief Justice said yesterday that Parliament would not need to introduce a law of privacy as the judges themselves would create one through the courts.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, giving his second press conference since he took up his office last year, said that a privacy law would develop through individual cases before the courts. This would be an "inevitable" consequence of the Government's intention to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into British law.

"My current belief is that there will be no need for legislation. The courts have to be seen as an arm of the state for this purpose... there will be a clear duty on the courts to protect privacy and my experience is that, over time, they will develop the law."

But equally, he added, the incorporation of the European convention — a move that he strongly favours — would also increase protection of the right of the press to free speech.

"What is going to have to be confronted is the demarcation boundary between free speech and privacy. I think this is difficult and debatable territory," he said.

The criterion which judges would use would be whether an intrusion was "in the public interest". People guilty of wrongdoing in public office should not escape exposure, but those who suffered intrusions into their private life had a right to redress, he said.

Lord Bingham said it was a strength of the system that the law could be developed according to individual cases, rather than on broad statements of principle.

As to the role of courts in interpreting laws for compliance with the new human

rights legislation, the Lord Chief Justice unequivocally supported, limiting judicial powers. He favoured the more conservative New Zealand model for a human rights Bill, something that the Government is expected to propose in its White Paper later this month. Under this, judges would not have the power to strike down parliamentary statutes — a power Lord Bingham said that he would not want.

"I think it is vastly preferable that judges do not embark on an exercise to disapply Acts of Parliament. It is not part of our constitutional tradition to do so and is bound to give rise to disquiet and unrest in Parliament," Lord Bingham expected that there would be a flood of cases immediately after incorporation, but that this would subside once the law became established.

Lord Bingham also reiterated his opposition to the televising of court cases, saying that

it would "increase enormously" the stress on those involved. "I think the cases which would receive maximum exposure would be full of macabre and often horrific detail."

He welcomed moves by the Government to strengthen the credibility of community sentences as an alternative to prison. He regretted that offenders who were given community service orders were often portrayed as having "got away with it" and suggested they should be renamed "criminal work orders" to reflect the tough nature of the punishment involved.

He repeated his opposition to mandatory life sentences for those convicted for a second time of a serious violent or sexual offence, but said that, as the Government intended to go ahead with this, the judges would have to ensure the measure would "work as well as it can".

Lord Bingham also backed calls for a public debate on the decriminalisation of softer drugs, such as cannabis. He welcomed the decision by the Independent Police Foundation to set up an inquiry into the issue.

He emphasised that he was not expressing a view on decriminalisation. "It is a subject that deserves, in my judgment, detached, objective, independent consideration."

"It may very well be that the result of such consideration would be that to tinkering with the current prohibition would be madness. But that doesn't seem to me an argument against considering the suggestion."

Last week, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, addressing the Labour Party conference, ruled out any move to decriminalise illegal drugs.



Bingham said there was no need for legislation.



Missing in action: the BBC's ruddy shelducks. After being groomed for fame, they flew away on their test flight behind a camera car

Natural stars duck out of their big TV debut

By Simon de Bruxelles

THE BBC's world-renowned natural history film unit has mislaid four of its star performers. The five-month-old ruddy shelducks had been raised by hand and were being trained to follow a camera car, but they vanished over the horizon on a test flight.

Six of the rare ducks were being groomed to star in an edition of *The Natural World* due to be broadcast next year. They were flying in perfect formation at an RAF base in Somerset when they peeped off and flew away. Despite the plaintive calls of Conrad Maufe, the BBC field assistant who had taken over the role of their natural mother, only two returned next day. The others were last seen heading south.

Mr Maufe, a naturalist,

had spent hundreds of hours rearing the ducklings at a private bird collection near Bristol, hand-feeding them and teaching them to follow him. The plan was to make them fly after him as he called from a car so a camera crew could film them in flight from just feet away. He learned their calls to be able to "speak" to them.

The ruddy shelduck, *Tadorna ferruginea* and not to be confused with the smaller ruddy duck, is red-brown with a black beak. It is found wild in Spain, North Africa, Turkey and the Middle East, but numbers are declining. Mr Maufe, who has been searching for his lost family since last Friday, said: "It's possible their migratory instinct has cut in. They might want

to head south, or just want to explore a bit. I think they'll probably be on some pond or stream nearby."

Mark Flowers, assistant producer at the BBC Natural History Unit in Bristol, said: "Conrad was like a parent to those ducks. He even had to put on wellies and lead them into ponds and lakes. It's a time-consuming technique, but amazing footage like this is what we're famous for."

The missing birds have white and red leg-tags. Richard Millington, of the Birdline Information service, said: "If they stick together we'll hear about them. But I doubt whether a human will ever regain their trust. It's about the time when they would naturally break from their parents and go off on their own."



Abandoned "mother": Maufe rears the ducklings

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Hague forced to backtrack over single currency

By Jill Sherman and Nicholas Wood

WILLIAM HAGUE has been forced to water down his policy on a single currency after a revolt by pro-Europeans in the Shadow Cabinet.

During the Tory leadership campaign, Mr Hague said that he would not let Britain join a single currency for the next ten years — until the end of the next Parliament. But yesterday he disappointed Eurosceptics by avoiding a timetable, saying only that he would rule it out for the foreseeable future.

When pressed if he meant no entry during the next Parliament, he replied: "I'm not going into hypotheses about future Parliaments. It means, certainly, if there was a referendum on the single currency in the next few years, we would be campaigning for a 'no' vote."

One of the most senior Eurosceptics, Michael Howard, said that "foreseeable future" meant until the end of the next Parliament. But other Shadow Cabinet ministers privately agreed that the policy had been toned down to exclude a deadline.

The change has been made only in the past few days. Last Thursday, the Shadow Cabinet agreed to rule out entering economic monetary union for a decade. The Tories would go into the next election pledging that they would not sign up during the next Parliament.

Mr Hague was pressed by some in the Shadow Cabinet to rule out joining EMU for

ever. Others agreed reluctantly to toe the ten-year line. But the key pro-Europeans in the Cabinet — Stephen Dorrell, David Curry, Alistair Goodlad and Sir George Young — were not present because of long-standing engagements.

When Mr Hague telephoned the absentees shortly afterwards, they said that the new line was unacceptable. "They went up the wall," said one insider.

By Saturday Mr Hague had agreed to fudge the line by removing the timetable. John Major appeared to be aware of the development when he wrote in *The Sunday Telegraph* that a single currency should be ruled out "in the foreseeable future".

Mr Hague has asked the Shadow Cabinet to hold that line until its next meeting after the conference. But there were signs that the fudge — almost identical to Mr Major's wait and see policy — was not sustainable. "Our line changes by the hour," said a senior Shadow minister. "This is John Major all over again."

Mr Howard, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, kept to the agreed line during his conference speech. But he said on BBC *Breakfast News* that "foreseeable future" effectively meant ten years. Mr Hague had said "that he expects to fight the next general election on a platform of not joining the single currency, not giving up the pound in the next

Parliament." Earlier Mr Howard had told representatives that many Tories had profound objections to the euro. "Others who do not rule out entry at some point feel that it would be the utmost folly to take part in such a risky economic experiment until we have had a decent opportunity to see how it works in practice."

"But we come together on this point. William Hague has been absolutely right to make it clear that the policy of this party is that Britain should not give up the pound in the foreseeable future."

Mr Howard played to the Eurosceptic elements of his audience, who earlier made known their own antipathy to the euro. Some argued that Britain should pull out of Europe altogether.

Anne-Louise Barnes, a Young Conservative from Wyre Forest, Hereford and Worcester, said: "There is only one answer to a single currency. As a famous lady once said, 'no, no, no'."

Peter Callard, from Lewes, East Sussex, said that it was time to end the "wait and see" policy espoused by Mr Major. "It was an honourable policy promoted by an honourable man, but it is time to move on. We could not sell wait-and-see on the doorstep."

Paul Oakley, from Greater London Young Conservatives, said that Mr Hague should "rule out our participation in the euro for ever".



Ffion Jenkins with a visitor to Bradley Beaver's restaurant yesterday. She sat the toddlers on her lap but declined all offers of candyfloss

Ffion finds refuge at Beaver Creek

WHEN Ffion Jenkins accepted William Hague's proposal of marriage she may not have suspected that as a consequence she would have to take lunch sitting on a toddler at Bradley Beaver's restaurant.

The First Fiancee has been working hard for her future husband's image. Her appearance in a £2,000 dress on the first night of the conference seemed to have been a success. Quite how much pleasure she gained from her jaunt yesterday to Blackpool Pleasure Beach only she could say.

Saying, however, is something Miss Jenkins does not do. Her silence in the presence of journalists exceeds

Damian Whitworth searches in vain for signs of amusement from the Tories' First Fiancee

even that of Mr Hague. Miss Jenkins, the press was informed, would be at Beaver Creek Kiddies' park shortly before noon yesterday. There would be strictly no interviews. Intrigued, *The Times* took the train to the Pleasure Beach and found a large gathering of like-minded journalists.

Unlike the Fleetwood fishmarket debate of Mr Hague's first conference photo-call, on this occasion the Conservative Party had found plenty of people for Miss Jenkins to meet. A

group of toddlers had arrived on a day out and were tucking into egg sandwiches sitting on their toddler seats at their toddler tables at Bradley Beaver's Catering Company at the heart of the windswept amusement park that is Beaver Creek.

Miss Jenkins dangled the tots on her knees, tried a little conversation but declined photographers' offers of candyfloss. She also refused to say whether or not she was enjoying herself or even planning to go for a

ride on the Big One, the rollercoaster that is the pride of Blackpool.

A desperate radio reporter was reduced to commenting: "We are all being moved back now... the children are still not looking very interested..."

Then Miss Jenkins said something. "That's enough," and she disappeared inside to talk to some more children. "She's seeking refuge inside Bradley Beaver's place..." the radio reporter said breathlessly. Then it was time to hop back on a golf buggy and trundle off to the waiting car. There wasn't even a minute to spare, apparently, to stop and check out Willie's Wurst, a hotdog stall.

I'm happy to be called a dinosaur, says unrepentant Tebbit

By Andrew Pierce
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LORD TEBBIT, basking in his familiar role as the Chingford skinhead after creating a disturbance at the Tory conference, vowed yesterday to continue his campaign against a multicultural society.

The Tory elder statesman, whose three-hour appearance in Blackpool dominated the

headlines for 24 hours, dismissed his rebuke from William Hague and said he enjoyed the kind of abuse directed at him.

In a speech on Tuesday to a fringe meeting of Conservatives against a Federal Europe, he said multiculturalism was a divisive force, adding: "One cannot uphold two sets of ethics or be loyal to two nations, any more than a man can have two masters."

Mr Hague's officials condemned the speech and compared him to a "dinosaur on the rampage".

Yesterday Lord Tebbit said: "I do not object in the slightest to being called a dinosaur. The dinosaur was a very successful species which dominated the planet for a very long time."

He returned home immediately after his speech on Tuesday, without having set foot in the conference centre. "I

think I had made my point," he said.

Asked whether he regretted his remarks, or the criticism heaped on him, he said: "Not in the slightest. I enjoy the abuse heaped on me by those sort of abusers. If I was a young and ambitious politician I might be concerned. But I am not. I am an old politician who is not ambitious. They can say what they like."

Mr Hague, however, was

determined to lay down the law. Referring to previous controversial remarks by Lord Tebbit, he told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "Norman's always had his own cricket tests of various kinds. I have my own cricket test now: if you don't want to be part of the team then get off the field."

But even as Mr Hague asserted his authority Lord Tebbit was pursuing a new line of opposition, this time

over gay rights. He criticised Mr Hague for sending a message of support to the Gay Pride march in London this year. He said: "If I had been the leader of the Conservative Party, I wouldn't have done so. I think it's not particularly compatible with our family values."

Lord Tebbit, who backed John Redwood in the Tory leadership contest, has never been close to William Hague.

They hardly know each other and rarely speak.

Party members were divided over Lord Tebbit's speech yesterday. Margaret Mervis, chairman of Wandsworth and Tooting Conservatives, said that his comments had been unfairly interpreted. "He wasn't saying we didn't want to integrate people, he was saying the reverse. We want these people but if they are going to have a stake in

Britain then they must absorb the culture of the country."

But Stuart Andrew from Wrexham said: "I think William Hague has got the right attitude. If we are going to win the next election there are so many people out there that we have got to get back on board from all walks of life — black, Asian and gay."

Leading article and Letters, page 21

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big say in

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Archer heads calls for big say in leadership

By POLLY NEWTON AND JAMES LANDALE

JEFFREY ARCHER led a barrage of calls yesterday from Tory activists for a greater say in the election of the leader. The former deputy chairman of the party was given a standing ovation at the conference after he said that the rank and file should have at least 50 per cent of the votes in a leadership ballot.

"The future of our party, the selection of our leader and discussions on future policy should not be left to a handful of MPs who think they have some superior wisdom," he said. "It was not the party workers who lost us the last election."

Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare said that if Tory supporters were expected to go on campaigning and raising money, they should be given some influence over policy and the leadership. Sir Archibald Hamilton, chairman of the 1922 Committee of MPs, accepted that reform would require "compromise on all sides" and said: "We too

accept there is a great need for these reforms."

Sir Archibald acknowledged that the rank and file members should have a say in the leadership contests. But he was booed when he said that MPs must retain the largest share of any electoral college vote "because any new leader needs to command the support of the majority of the Parliamentary party."

Lord Archer joined several speakers in attacking Conservative MPs for fighting amongst themselves. "Even I underestimated the Parliamentary party's ability to form a circular firing squad," he said. "If we are to be trusted by the British people once again we must stop quarrelling among ourselves and, if there are those who cannot stop quarrelling, I say to them, 'Shove off and join another party.'"

Jonathan Marland from Salisbury said: "I witnessed a great party, the party of natural government, fall into a state of disarray. A party that

openly feuded amongst itself. A party that rounded viciously on its leader."

"And in all this, the party has suffered at the hands of a few who have put their own interests before those of the nation and our associations. We know who they are. These reforms must allow us to turn those people out. MPs must understand who they are working for — the electorate, not themselves."

John Strafford, from Westsex Area, accused the 1922 Committee of acting like "the town council in Jurassic Park" and called for ordinary members to have a direct vote in leadership elections. "We want the full 'romney' of democracy," he said.

Marjorie Simpson, chairman of Stockton South, blamed MPs for the election defeat. "I understand that even here some leading figures are rattling their sabres and sharpening their knives. The voluntary party is no longer willing to stand by watching while they destroy

our leader and our party. Loyalty should be rewarded, disloyalty should be dealt with severely and permanently."

Eric Chalker, from Greater London Area, said Mr Hague should give activists a greater representation on the new controlling board. Robin Hodgson, chairman of National Union voluntary wing of the party, said the proposed changes provided the basic building blocks for reform but urged activists to speak their minds during the consultation period. "I do not believe the sensible expression of personal views about the future of our party is an issue of loyalty," he said.

"We, the volunteers, must accept the need for change. But so must the Members of Parliament."

Archie Norman, the Tory vice-chairman who drew up the reform "green paper", sought to calm grassroots fears by recognising the "real and genuine" concerns. But he warned that there would be "balances and trade-offs."



Lord Archer: "It was not party workers who lost us the election" he told activists

Clarke has eye on Hague's job

By ANDREW PIERCE

KENNETH CLARKE dismayed the Tory leadership yesterday when he refused to rule out mounting a challenge against William Hague.

The former Chancellor, who was the choice of the party activists to succeed John Major, reaffirmed his burning ambition to become party leader and Prime Minister. Asked whether he would challenge a serving Tory leader, he said: "I have no idea. I have no intention of standing against the present one. At the present time."

In an interview with the *London Evening Standard*, Mr Clarke loyally repeated that the Tories would win the next election with Mr Hague at the helm, but said he had an open mind on his strategy if they lost.

If the Tories won, he said, his chances of leading the party would be "getting thin or thinnish."

Tories have yet to face up to their new status

THE party grassroots angry about their MPs, and demanding a majority say in the election of the leader. Sounds familiar? At the Labour conference in Brighton after it had lost the 1979 election, the surviving MPs and ex-MPs were corralled into a prominent pen where they were denounced as "traitors" by every delegate wanting to win easy applause. It was the first public sign of the Beornite upsurge which convulsed Labour over the following two years, and ended the MPs' monopoly in the election of the leader.

Tory manners are more restrained, and no fingers were waved aggressively yesterday in the party reform debate, though it came very near. And, unlike Labour in 1979, the Tory grassroots are not blaming the last Government. However, speaker after speaker was loudly cheered whenever they criticised the parliamentary party, and its divisions. Jeffrey Archer took on the tub-thumping mantle of

the attempt to double membership.

But just as in Labour's upheavals after 1979, there is a danger of the MPs becoming easy scapegoats as the much wider malaise is ignored. The minority of familiar troublemakers often made John Major's premiership hell and they helped to turn the Tory defeat into a rout. But the fractiousness of a couple of dozen MPs was only one reason. The eagerness of members of the Shadow Cabinet to don hair shirts and take the blame for the loss has sounded insincere as well as unconvincing.

The search for scapegoats and traitors is always an evasion, and usually a politically dishonest one. "Blame the MPs" disguises the real reasons why the Tories lost and puts off the necessary inquest. Labour wasted the first half of the 1979-83 parliament obsessed with internal constitutional arguments. At least the Tories are now sensibly trying to resolve these matters much more quickly with the final package approved next spring.

But apart from yesterday's debate, there has been a marked reluctance so far to face up to the consequences of defeat. The Labour victory has been seen as merely a triumph of public relations and most speakers have failed to recognise, let alone understand, the change in public mood.

Many Tories, including quite a few ex-ministers, talk and behave as if they were still in office. They have sounded complacent in referring to the "golden legacy" which Labour has inherited, almost as if there was nothing wrong with the last Government's policies. The Major Government did have a better record than was widely thought at the time. But not only is this the wrong time to make such self-justificatory claims, but it also hinders the necessary re-thinking by the party. One historically minded MP joked that the mood must have been similarly unreal in Vichy in 1943.

The Tory leadership hopes that yesterday's debate will end the party's public soul-searching. But its readjustment to its new position is only beginning.

PETER RIDDELL

Redwood moves to another planet

By ANDREW PIERCE

JOHN REDWOOD sought yesterday to dispel once and for all his image as a Vulcan by transporting himself to planet Jupiter.

Having been dogged for years by the Vulcan nickname, he has decided to reinvent himself. The Mr Spock of British politics, so called because of his alien air and slight resemblance to the *Star Trek* character, presented a softer image at the party conference yesterday.

Mr Redwood, Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, sported a fresh haircut, a warm grin, and stylish suit and tie. As the loudspeakers played the Jupiter sequence from Gustav Holst's *Planets*

Suite, he marched through the conference hall to the platform to cheers and loud applause.

His speech was intended to reveal that Mr Redwood had a sense of humour after all. "Yes, that music was from the *Planet Suite*," he declared. "Some attribute to me super-human powers. Given the mess that mere mortal Labour politicians are making of things that is no bad thing."

His aides were delighted. "This is the new John," said one. "That showed the warm, humorous, and definitely very human politician. The Vulcan is dead and buried."

They clearly do not watch *Star Trek*. Vulcans live for ever.

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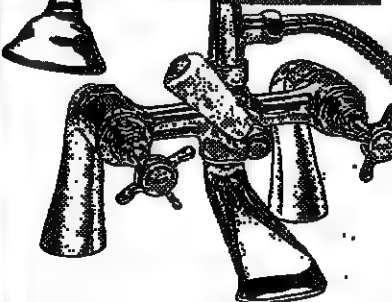
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Victim died 'because fireman halted rescue'

A widow's case questions the brigade's power. Richard Duce reports

A FIREMAN caused the death of a trapped building foreman when he ordered the man's workmates to stop trying to dig him free from a trench, the High Court was told yesterday.

A case for compensation brought by the dead man's widow is thought to be the first personal-injury claim against firemen involved in a rescue operation. Eileen Daly, 66, of Downham, southeast London, claims that the workmates of her husband, Hugh, could have saved him and that Station Officer Bob Smith had no lawful authority to instruct them to stop.

Mr Daly, 51, suffocated to death under 12ft of earth after the trench collapsed on him in September 1991 at the site of a new sports centre in Guildford, Surrey. Richard Davies, QC, for Mrs Daly, said that Mr Daly was trapped after he climbed into the trench to mend a broken pipe.

Bernard O'Halloran, a digger driver, began a rescue attempt and removed 3ft of

earth from an adjacent trench in an attempt to reach Mr Daly, who was being fed oxygen through a pipe by ambulancemen. The fireman ordered a halt to the rescue attempts while his men took over.

Mr Davies told the court: "Mr O'Halloran says his intention was mechanically to excavate a trench at 90 degrees



Compensation claim: Eileen Daly yesterday

to the existing trench, leaving a barrier of earth between the two trenches, and then to permit a trench box to be lowered so that the final one, two or three feet of earth could be excavated by hand.

"That was the most expeditious way and probably the only way by which Mr Daly could be rescued. What Mr O'Halloran was attempting to do was understood and expressly agreed to by people who had expertise in trench construction."

"Mr O'Halloran's assertion is that Station Officer Smith called out and ordered him to stop. He did that by jumping into the trench Mr O'Halloran had dug, standing on the excavator bucket and telling him to stop, that he was in charge, and that if anything happened to the man he, Mr O'Halloran, could find himself on a charge of manslaughter."

"Mr O'Halloran regrets following that instruction to this day. Had Mr O'Halloran been allowed to continue or resume his activities, the deceased

would, on the balance of probabilities, have been saved alive."

Firemen started their own rescue attempt. Forty minutes later, they got close enough to Mr Daly, but a doctor pronounced that he was certainly dead. Mr Daly's workmates were then allowed to continue their excavations. His body was dug free nearly three hours after he became trapped.

Mr Davies said that members of the fire brigade could take over a situation only in the event of a fire. Other duties such as rescues were "special duties" which they had no legal obligation to perform, he said.

Mrs Daly is claiming damages for alleged negligence from Surrey County Council, which is responsible for the actions of Surrey Fire Brigade. The council denies liability, claiming that Station Officer Smith, now retired, acted correctly and that the digger operated by Mr O'Halloran was making matters worse. The hearing continues.



Faces from the past: Women of Fyston celebrating on VE-Day. Below, the photographer Jack Hulme



Rescue for pit pictures that made a village cry

By PAUL WILKINSON

A PHOTOGRAPHIC record of life in a mining village has been saved from certain destruction. Shot on volatile nitrate film, the scenes were gradually degraded into an explosive jelly which threatened to burst into flames.

Now the 15,000 images are being transferred first to modern safety film and eventually on to a CD-Rom computer disc, in a £2000 project at Pontefract Museum, west Yorkshire. The pictures, dating from the Depression to the 1960s, were shot by Jack Hulme, a disabled pit worker in nearby Fyston.

Richard Van Riel, the museum's curator, said: "As an historical document, his photographs are irreplaceable. We put on an exhibition in the village and we couldn't believe the response. Some people were in tears as many could not afford cameras when they were younger and got to see their parents' faces for the first time in years."

Mr Hulme, who died aged 83 in 1990, took many of the pictures on surplus film from RAF stock which had to be cut up to fit his camera. Many were of weddings and funerals as he used his wife's gift of a Leica camera to earn extra cash. As a child, he had lost the use of one of his legs in a playground accident, but went down the pit as a first-aider and also worked as village barber.

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Death of Princess could cut alcohol limits

FROM CHARLES BREMER IN BRUSSELS

THE death of Diana, Princess of Wales, will be invoked today by Neil Kinnock, the EU Transport Commissioner, when he calls on Britain and seven other EU states to bring their drink-driving limits to a standard level of 50 milligrams per litre of blood. The level represents about two glasses of wine or a pint of beer.

The deaths of the Princess and Dodi Fayed, her companion, in a crash that also killed Henri Paul — their driver, who had been drinking — had focused public attention on the dangers of drunken driving. Mr Kinnock is due to tell EU Transport Ministers. About 40,000 people had been killed on EU roads since the Paris accident "11, at a time when there was widespread and justified public grief about that tragedy. There can also be deeper public understanding about the causes of those preventable deaths than perhaps some good can come out of the horror."

The Government has welcomed Mr Kinnock's initiative and said it plans to reduce the British limit from 80 milligrams to 50 next year. Britain has the lowest accident rate in the EU.

France, which has twice Britain's road-death rate, has enforced a 50 milligram limit for the past three years. Sweden has the lowest limit in the EU at 20 milligrams. The death rate is highest in Greece, Portugal and Belgium. Most EU states allow random alcohol testing of drivers.

Mr Kinnock cited British and French scientific evidence that shows that the "risk of accident" is doubled when the blood alcohol content is 80 and by ten times when the level is 160. The Commission is trying to orchestrate an EU-wide effort to bring down an accident rate that kills 45,000 people a year and injures 1.6 million on the roads of the 15 member states. Alcohol is implicated in a quarter of all road accidents that cause injury in the EU, in half that cause deaths and in 65 per cent of accidents that involve a single car, Mr Kinnock is to tell the ministers.

'Lollipop' may lick problem of drivers on drugs

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

SCIENTISTS are developing a "lollipop" roadside test to identify drivers under the influence of drugs. The saliva-based analysis, based on one lick by the suspected motorist, is believed to be the first of its kind in the world.

Drivers on drugs are a rapidly growing problem in Britain. A Department of Transport study revealed that a quarter of people involved in fatal accidents in the 11 months from October 1996 had taken drugs, 20 per cent of which were illegal.

The hand-held testing device is being developed by Cozart Bioscience in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, and is undergoing accuracy trials with forensic scientists at Glasgow University. Prototypes are in production and it could be ready for use in a year, although legislation would have to be introduced to give police powers to take a saliva test.

Early trials show that it is 95-100 per cent accurate, a success rate comparable to conventional laboratory urine and blood tests. Ten different drugs, including cannabis, Ecstasy, cocaine, methadone, amphetamines, benzodiazepines, opiates including heroin and morphine, and barbiturates, can be detected

by the device. Police using the "lollipop" would ask suspect motorists to place an absorbent swab attached to a plastic "lolly" stick into their mouth to take a saliva sample.

The disposable swab would then be placed in a mobile-phone-sized test box which would give a digital reading of the drugs present within five minutes. The chemical test box uses immunoassay, or antibodies, to detect substances.

If the test proved positive, officers would then take the person to a police station where a second, conventional, blood or urine sample would be taken for a corroborating analysis in a laboratory.

At the moment there is no on-the-spot screening device to help police to identify drivers on drugs. Traffic officers have

to rely on recognising the symptoms of drug-taking and must have a suspicion the motorist's driving is impaired before they can require a conventional test.

The "lollipop" has been developed over the past year with a £45,000 grant from the Department of Trade and Industry. The company has already had talks with the Forensic Science Service, the agency for the Home Office, which would have to give its approval before the device was adopted by forces nationwide.

The Department of Transport and the Home Office have also shown interest in a cigar-shaped skin-swipe developed in Germany which can detect four different drugs from sweat samples.

According to Christopher Hand, managing director of Cozart, the "lollipop" could also be used for employee screening and by drug clinics. It could be further developed for sport to detect drugs such as steroids. The cost of the device has not yet been released.

"There is no roadside test for drugs at the moment, but this could be used in the same way as the hand-held breathalyser. As far as we know it is the first of its kind in the world," he said.



Christopher Hand with his "lollipop" tester

Breathalyser has saved 62,000 lives

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

THE breathalyser cost just five shillings when it was introduced 30 years ago today, but it has saved an estimated 62,000 lives.

The handheld "blow-in-the-bag" gadget became part of British life after Barbara Castle, then the Transport Minister, decided that action was needed to reduce the toll of road casualties. About 2,000 people were dying in drink-driving accidents every year, at Christmas 1966, 158 were killed in five days.

Before the 1967 Road Safety Act, driving under the influence of a few drinks was often viewed with more amusement than concern. As Mrs Castle formulated her plans, newspapers were filled with indignation at the supposed infringement of motorists' rights and warnings that pubs would go out of business.

A device was needed that was small enough for police to carry yet accurate enough to

provide evidence that the driver was over the limit. The answer came from Dräger, based in Northumberland. Its Alcotest 80 machine, approved by Mrs Castle, was an arrangement in which the driver blew over a phial of crystals which changed colour to signal that there was more than 80mg of alcohol in the blood.

In spite of all this fuss raised over the introduction of the breathalyser, motorists were caught by surprise when police started using it. The first test was administered on a motorist in Somerset on the first day of the new law.

Drink-related road deaths fell 11 per cent in the first year after the breathalyser's introduction. Last year such deaths were down to 540 from that horrific peak in the Sixties.

At 60mg of alcohol in blood, a driver's chances of having a fatal accident double, according to the British Medical Association.



Father is not past his peak: mother Crackers and one of her calves yesterday

Sporting giraffe achieves a double

BY A STAFF REPORTER

AN ELDERLY giraffe has surprised staff at London Zoo by fathering offspring by two mates within less than a month of each other. At the age of 22, he was thought to have been too old for parenthood.

The father is named Hillary, after the mountaineer Sir Edmund. Yesterday the zoo was looking for ideas for names for the two male calves, possibly continuing a tradition of sporting heroes.

Andy James, one of his keepers, said: "Hillary is a bit old for this sort of thing. The average life of a giraffe in captivity is only about 25 years, but he still seems interested in the ladies."

In the past, calves have been named after the footballer Gary Lineker, the skier Eddie the Eagle, the runner Sally Gunnett and the tennis star Virginia Wade. Mr James said: "It's about time we had another footballer."

Hillary's two mates, Dawn and Crackers, gave birth on the August 25 and September 8. As the calves went before the cameras yesterday, they were still shy with strangers, and stuck by their mothers in the zoo's custom-built enclosure.

Since they arrived at the zoo, Crackers has had eight calves and Dawn nine. All were fathered by Hillary.

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Warning bells ring for Europe's forests



Facing destruction: Glenfeshie Forest is dying because of overgrazing by sheep and deer, claims the WWF

Conservationists fear woods may not survive next century, says Nick Nuttall

AN ANCIENT Scottish pine forest, said to be "dying on its feet", is among thousands of woodland regions worldwide in need of urgent protection if they are to survive the next century, conservationists said yesterday.

The warning about Glenfeshie Forest came from the World Wide Fund for Nature as it produced research, based on satellite images, showing that two thirds of the woodlands that covered the globe after the last Ice Age have been cleared for agriculture and housing. The charity said the level of loss of forests was rising in Asia and Europe, triggering catastrophic destruction of landscape and wildlife.

In Brazil, site of the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, forest loss is said to have increased by more than a third in the past five years. Martin Mathers, of the fund, said the inability of governments to adequately protect special, old-growth forests was not confined to the developing world.

Glenfeshie Forest, in the Cairngorms, part of a privately owned 17,000-hectare estate which has recently been put



on the market for £6 million. It is one of only eight remnants of the once-mighty Caledonian forests. The area is home to pine martens, golden eagles, wildcats, red squirrels, capercaillie and the Scottish crossbill, the only British bird found nowhere else in the world. The forest is dying, however, because no new trees are surviving the overgrazing by sheep and deer. Simon Pepper, head of WWF Scotland, said: "Glenfeshie is dying on its feet and exemplifies the fate of native forests in the UK as a whole."

In theory Glenfeshie, of which only 250 hectares of the ancient forest remains, is a protected area under national and proposed European habitat directives. The system of voluntary arrangements between government nature agencies and landowners which operates in Britain has failed to conserve the site.

Mr Mathers said: "I was in the forest recently and we could not find a tree under 150 years old." A spokesman for the Forestry Commission said yesterday that it and Scottish Natural Heritage, the Government's wildlife advisers, were trying to put a consortium together to buy the land.

There are fears, however, that yet another private purchaser, keen on sporting and shooting rather than conservation, may buy Glenfeshie. The news came as fund launched a list of 100 of Europe's most biologically im-

portant forests which it wants governments to protect properly by 2000. The list has been compiled by the group in co-operation with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge, scientists, government experts and conservationists.

Satellite images show that 62 per cent of Europe's original forest cover has been lost, with Britain losing 97 per cent, the fund says. The group claims that 98 per cent of Europe's remaining ancient forests are unprotected, with valuable woodlands in Scandinavia to temperate rainforests in Georgia and Turkey disappearing.

The fund called on European Governments to follow the lead of Finland, where the Government has allocated £530 million to buy and protect valuable old-growth forests.

The fund's research indicates that the Asian Pacific has lost 88 per cent of its original forest cover; Europe 62 per cent; Africa 45 per cent; Latin America, 41 per cent; North America, 39 per cent; and Russia 35 per cent.

Fires similar to those in Indonesia which have triggered huge, health-damaging, smogs throughout the region, are also raging in the Amazon. Steve Howard, of the fund, said yesterday. He claims 500,000 hectares — an area a quarter the size of Wales — is ablaze, out of an area of 500 million acres.

Mr Howard said that, despite laws requiring owners of land to keep 80 per cent of it covered in forest, Brazil's deforestation continued out of control. The fund calculates that, for every 200 hectares burnt legally, 1,000 are burnt accidentally.

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Dutch elm disease reaches all parts

By MICHAEL HORNBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

DUTCH elm disease has invaded the last part of Britain left untouched by the lethal infection, which during the past 30 years has virtually wiped out what was once among the most familiar of native trees.

Scientists have diagnosed the sickness in an elm in a garden near Nairn, on the south coast of the Moray Firth. Derek Redfern, a tree pathologist with the Forestry Commission at Roslin, near Edinburgh, said: "The disease has been moving north, but this is the first case we have found in the Moray Firth, the only area that was still free of infection."

Dutch elm disease — so-called because scientists in The Netherlands were the first to study it, in detail — is

caused by a microscopic fungus, *Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*. The fungus is spread by two types of flying beetle that lay their eggs in elm bark.

Dr Redfern said it was possible that the Nairn tree was an isolated case, caused by the chance introduction of the fungus on logs or firewood, but if that was not so it would be difficult to stop the disease spreading. "The only way of halting the disease is to destroy the tree before the bark beetle has a chance to migrate," he said. "But in a rural area it is difficult to be sure you have identified all the infected trees."

The current epidemic began in 1965 in Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, and is estimated to have killed 25 million elms.

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An evening with Kevin Keegan

TIMES readers are invited to a Times/Dillons forum on Thursday October 16 in London with Kevin Keegan, the former manager of Newcastle United. Keegan, who was also an England international footballer, will be the star speaker on a panel which will include Oliver Holt, football correspondent of The Times. Among the topics for discussion are details of Keegan's sudden departure from Newcastle last season, his views on modern management, his return to football with Fulham and England's World Cup prospects.

The forum marks the publication of Keegan's *My Autobiography* (Little Brown £16.99) and will be held at Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London SW1 at 7.30pm. Admission price is £10 (concessions £7.50) and includes £2 off the price of the book. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to put questions to him.

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Papon at risk of jail death, says lawyer

The final act of a judicial marathon began yesterday as a frail 87-year-old faced claims that he deported hundreds to die, writes Ben Macintyre in Bordeaux

MAURICE PAPON, the elderly retired civil servant on trial for deporting hundreds of Jews to Nazi death camps in the Second World War, confronted his accusers across a Bordeaux courtroom for the first time yesterday as his lawyer argued that the accused man could die if held in jail throughout the long judicial process.



Varaut plans two-day speech for the defence

the pro-Nazi Vichy regime is accused of organising the deportation of more than 1,500 Jews from Bordeaux between 1943 and 1944, only a handful of whom survived the Nazi gas chambers.

Under French law, M. Papon is liable to be held in detention throughout the trial, but his lawyers insisted there was no danger that he would attempt to flee and that he should be freed on bail.

M. Varaut argued that his client, who he described as "the oldest prisoner in the world", had slept for only three hours during his first night in prison on the eve of the trial, and claimed that the strain of incarceration had already caused "the beginnings of suffocation".

He said M. Papon was being held in a ten-square-metre cell without special medical equipment and had been forced to use a special device several times during the night to prevent a heart attack.

In a sign of what is to come in a trial that will last for at least three months, lawyers for the defence, prosecution and civil plaintiffs in the case skirmished vehemently over whether the ageing bureaucrat should be freed during his trial.

M. Papon, who was clad in a blue suit and dark tie, cut a composed if gaunt figure — the model of an austere civil servant — at the beginning of the final act of a judicial marathon that has taken 16 years to come to court, more than half a century after the events in question.

But in a sign of his nervousness, M. Papon's long fingers entwined and his brow furrowed repeatedly as he gazed

directly ahead. When asked to comment, M. Papon declared in a clear voice that he wished to "work with legal advisers without having to put up with the intolerable weight of detention".

Only once did he smile when his lawyer politely referred to him as "M. le ministre", a reference to the highest office of his glittering post-war career as budget minister under President Giscard d'Estaing.

According to judicial experts, if M. Papon is released on bail for the trial, he is likely to remain at liberty, even if sentenced to life imprisonment during the long appeals process that is sure to follow. If so, the ailing accused war criminal's current stay in Grignan jail may be his first and last experience of prison.

M. Papon has threatened to refuse to answer questions in court if he is forced to remain in detention, prompting an angry response from his accusers.

Gerard Boulanger, a lawyer representing many of the families of Jews deported on M. Papon's orders, described the threat as "more blackmail".

"Once again he is fleeing and hiding in the shadows," M. Boulanger said.

M. Varaut, however, argued that keeping the former Paris police chief in a prison for common criminals was unfair and unnecessary.

On Tuesday night, as M. Papon arrived at Grignan, outside Bordeaux, fellow inmates greeted him with insults and cries of "Death to Papon".

The accused man is one of the few people still alive from



The grey-haired Maurice Papon arrives at the court yesterday at the start of his trial for deporting hundreds of Jews to Nazi gas chambers

the wartime era, M. Varaut argued, noting the "graveyard full of witnesses," which, he suggested, M. Papon would be in danger of joining if he continued to be held under such "inhumane conditions".

But prosecutors and civil plaintiffs argued that M. Papon should not receive special treatment, given the gravity of the charges against him.

The prosecutors insisted that M. Papon represented a slight risk, pointing out that

while he was officially under judicial supervision, he had been staying in Marbella, Spain, since the beginning of July — a fact that was not made known to prosecutors until September 17.

Henri Desclaux, the chief prosecutor, said that he was prepared to consider other forms of incarceration, "including hospitalisation".

The families of those who perished in Auschwitz opposed making M. Papon's life

more comfortable, pointing to the atrocities in which he had allegedly played such a key role.

"I've been having nightmares for two weeks thinking I'm going to breathe the same air as that man," Therese Stopnicki, whose younger sister was among those deported from Bordeaux, said.

More than a hundred witnesses will be summoned to the heavily guarded Bordeaux Palace of Justice in the coming

weeks as the court attempts to establish not only M. Papon's precise role in the Final Solution, but also the complex political and moral environment of the entire Vichy era.

The court appointed two doctors, including a heart specialist, to examine M. Papon in his cell. They were ordered to deliver their opinion by mid-day today.

Before yesterday's opening session, ceremonies of remembrance were held at Merignac,

the site of a Second World War holding camp for deportees, and at a synagogue near the court. At Merignac, Serge Klarsfeld, the French Nazi hunter, joined Jewish groups to read out the names of dozens of Jewish children allegedly deported on M. Papon's orders.

A poll published yesterday showed French opinion split over the importance of the trial, with 42 per cent expressing little or no interest.

Defender of hopeless causes tackles his toughest case yet

By Ben Macintyre

JEAN-MARC VARAUT, has spent his legal career defending unpopular causes. But for sheer parish status none of his former clients comes close to Maurice Papon.

"The enmity evoked by the accused Nazi collaborator — and being heaped by association on his lawyer — is precisely the spark that motivates M. Varaut: lawyer, poet, historian, monarchist and patron of dubious, controversial or apparently lost causes.

"When people are unanimously against one man, that is the moment to be a lawyer, M. Varaut, 62, observed before the trial began. "I do not choose my clients. I am chosen." M. Varaut faces an

uphill task to persuade the jury, not to mention French public opinion, that M. Papon is innocent of crimes against humanity. But his colleagues say that if anyone can swing the case it is the quiet, cerebral and determined barrister from Paris.

For two years M. Varaut has ploughed through 20,000 pages of documents and countless books on the Papon case, preparing a defence speech he says will last two full days — the longest pleading in French legal history.

M. Varaut prides himself on his sense of the past, which suggests an affinity with history's martyrs. He makes no secret of his advocacy the

phonetic King Louis XVI or former support for "L'Algerie Francaise" against the forces of anti-abortion activists — but insists his association with the Right is "pure chance".

He agreed to defend M. Papon, he says, because he is "convinced that this man did nothing but his duty throughout his life".

A solid bulldog of a man, M. Varaut, a chronic insomniac, looks like a veteran boxer alongside his spare and elegant client. M. Varaut combines an establishment pedigree with a reputation for dogged perseverance that will ensure M. Papon does not go down without a strenuous fight.

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Hezbollah raid casts pall over peace summit

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE Israeli and Palestinian leaders held their first summit for eight months yesterday, a move described by President Clinton as "not a moment too soon".

Only hours after Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat met, the tinderbox atmosphere in the region was underlined by reports from occupied southern Lebanon that five more Israeli soldiers had been killed and eight wounded in two ambushes mounted by the Iranian-backed Islamic group Hezbollah.

Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat have now agreed to meet regularly. The snap summit came amid jitters about Israeli-Palestinian conflict and training exercises by Israeli forces designed to facilitate the reconquest of West Bank towns and cities handed over to the control of Mr Arafat under the terms of the

1993 peace accord. The seriousness of the Arab-Israeli crisis was underlined by President Clinton, whose special envoy, Dennis Ross, arranged the two-and-a-half-hour meeting on the Gaza-Israel border.

The most important thing is it occurred and it occurred not a moment too soon," Mr Clinton said of the pre-dawn summit. "We have had some difficult developments in the Middle East. It may be that the developments of the last few days have been so troubling that it has got the attention of both sides."

"I hope that this is what happened," the President added, showing his concern over the deterioration of relations between the Netanyahu Government and Mr Arafat's Palestinian Authority which observers had predicted would abandon the 1993 peace accord.

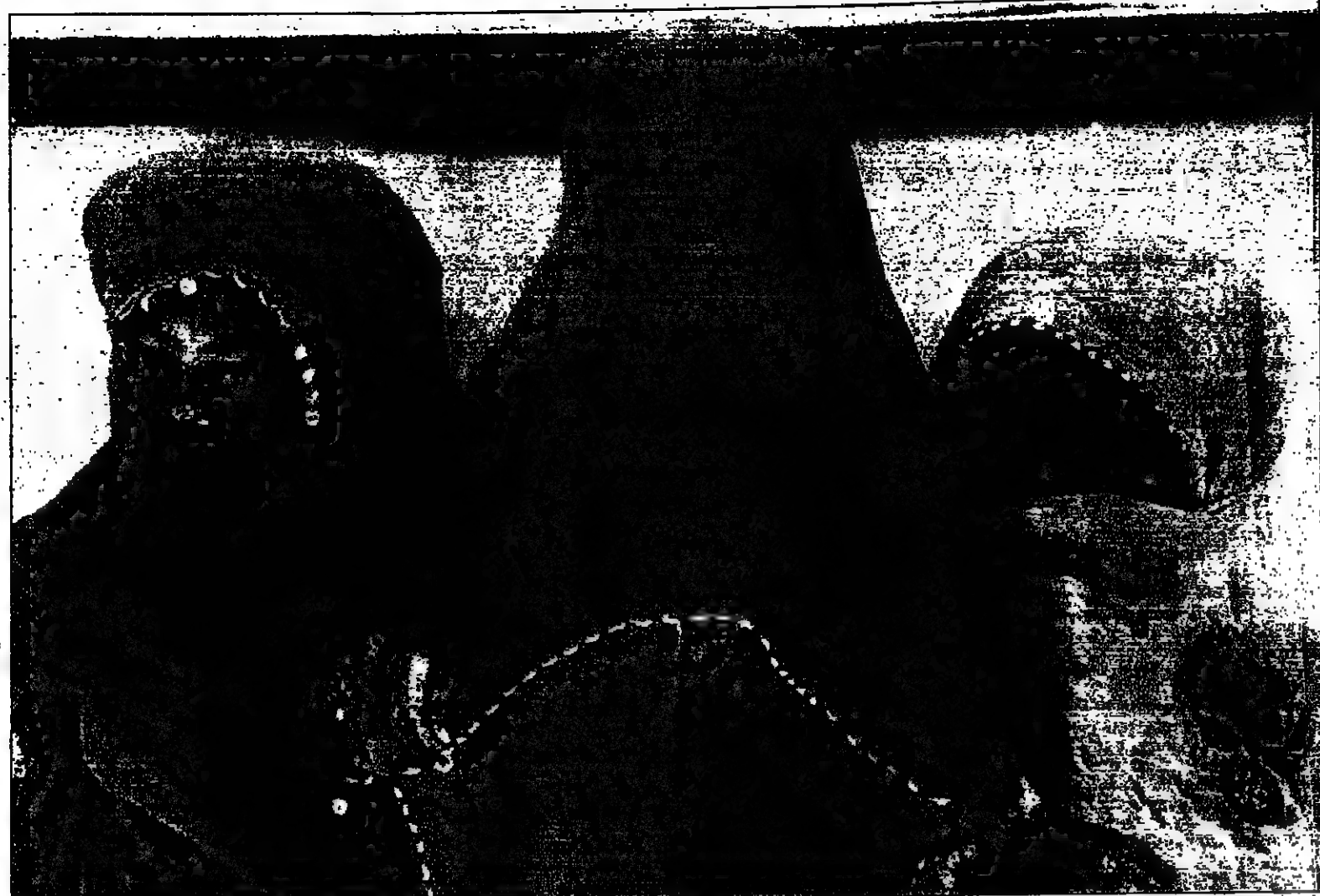
The summit took place

under a news blackout imposed when both leaders left without speaking to reporters. Mr Ross, who will return to the region for more intensive diplomacy next week, said both had agreed to hold talks regularly.

Israel sent a doctor with an antidote to the mystery poison used in the bungled assassination attempt on Khaled Meshaal, the Hamas politburo chief in Jordan. Israeli sources said that the chances of saving the life of Mr Meshaal, now released from hospital, had been only 50-50.

King Hussein of Jordan said yesterday that if Mr Meshaal had died, he would have broken off the 1994 peace treaty he signed with Israel.

The King said he had told President Clinton "that for me, the life of the peace process hangs on the life of this Jordanian".



Iranian girls wearing the bright chadors typical of many rural areas, in contrast to the black garments common in most of the country

No drop-out for hippies financing aged parents and growing children

BY TUNKU VARADARAJAN

PEOPLE over 85 are the fastest growing age group in America, and this new demographic category, "the Old Old", is placing an unprecedented strain on the middle-aged generation which must care for them, and which must at the same time pay fat bills for children who have not quite flown the coop.

The current buzzword for this ever-burdened group, known in happier times as "the Woodstock generation" or the Baby Boomers, is the "Sandwich Generation".

Writing in the current issue of *The New Yorker* magazine, the author James Atlas explains that they are so called because they find themselves "simultaneously writing cheques for their children's college tuition and their parent's nursing home bills".

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that this generation, which still reveals a residue of the happy-go-lucky Baby Boomer mentality, has been much worse at saving money than previous generations.

Finishing themselves now, as Mr Atlas puts it, to be the first American generation with "more parents than offspring", many of the country's middle-class middle-aged are reeling from an embarrassing shortage of funds. This is aggravated by the fact that many women in two-income

families are being forced to stay at home with parents who suffer from Alzheimer's disease, which afflicts almost half of all people aged over 85.

Modish economists are calling these families "the hidden poor", although most members of this class would probably prefer to describe themselves as suffering from problems of liquidity. The meaning, of course, is the same but the alternative expression is more genteel.

The Old Old are putting a considerable strain on household budgets. According to recent surveys, American families as a group now spend approximately \$2 billion (£1.25 billion) a month on caring for elderly parents and relatives. In fact, 22.4 million American households are involved in caring for elderly family members today, up from only 7 million households ten years ago.

At the same time, more than ten million students are enrolled at universities with the tuition cost of an average four-year degree ranging from \$39,000 at a state university to \$82,000 at the Ivy League end of the scale.

So acute is the budgetary strain that many banks are offering the Sandwich Generation advice on "intergenerational financial planning".



The hippy generation is now sandwiched between two generations and is struggling to pay for both

Clinton faces gripe of wine industry wrath

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN wine growers have uncorked a torrent of sour grapes against President Clinton, refusing to support his request for fast-track negotiating authority until he provides a long-promised boost to their sales abroad.

During a series of visits to Capitol Hill, leading Californian vineyard owners have expressed their anger with the President's plans to build on the North American Free Trade Agreement, a pact they had been assured would result in more competitive pricing for American wines in Mexico. In 1993, the Wine Institute, which represents the biggest vineyards such as Ernest and

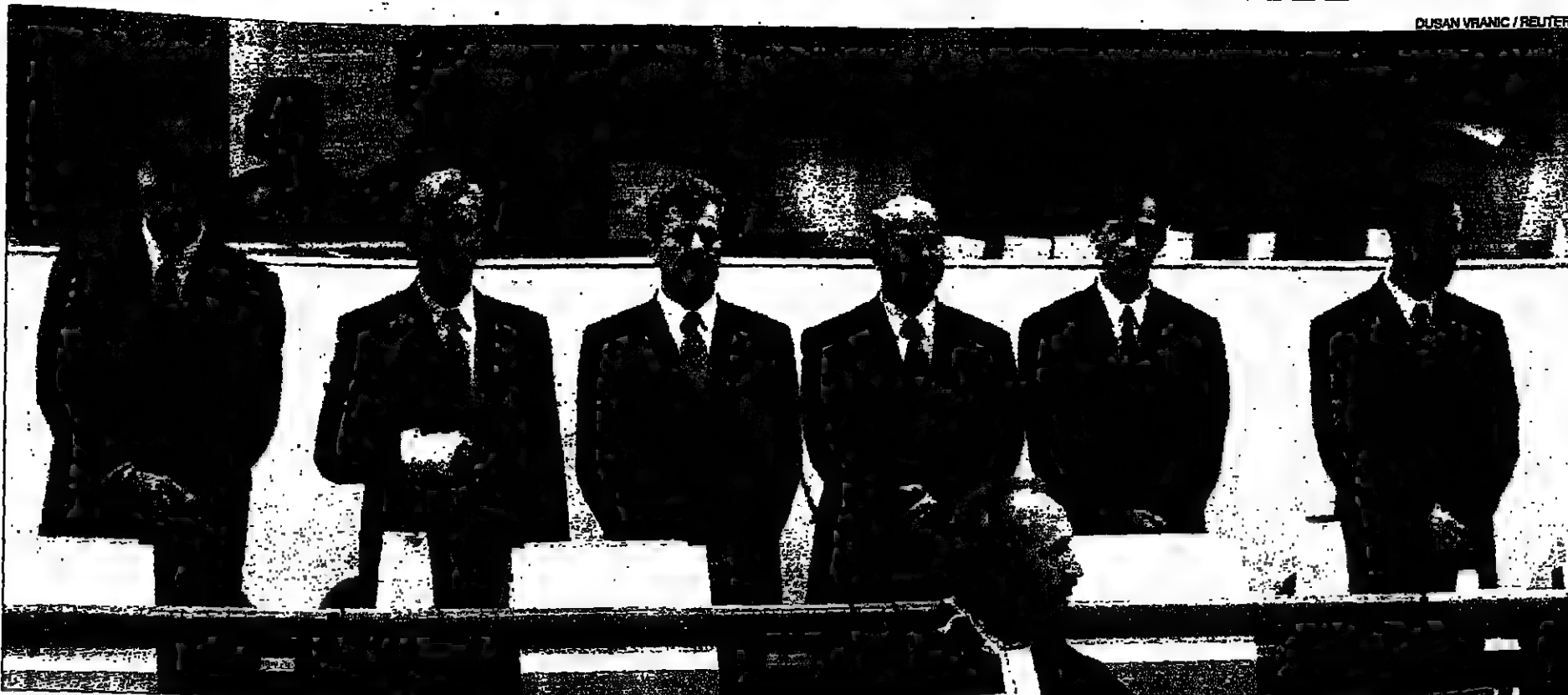
Julio Gallo Wine, had lobbied for the passage of NAFTA after winning a promise from Mickey Kantor, then US Trade Representative, to negotiate lower tariffs and so place American wine exports on an equal footing with Chile in the Mexican market. Mr Kantor failed to keep his promise.

The wine-makers are now refusing to play ball. They are the highest profile antagonists to a fast-track bill by which Mr Clinton hopes to gain extra powers in negotiating trade policy free of congressional interference. The Administration is now concerned that the issue may become a referendum on NAFTA.

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Bosnian Croats in court at The Hague yesterday. From left, Dragan Papic, Marinko Katava, Drago Josipovic, Vladimir Santic, Mirjan Kupreskic and Zoran Kupreskic

Croatians deny war crimes charges

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN BRUSSELS

THE Bosnian Croat who was highest on the United Nations' wanted list yesterday pleaded not guilty at the International War Crimes tribunal in The Hague to charges that he ordered the killing or deportation of thousands of Bosnian Muslim civilians in the former Yugoslavia.

Dario Kordic, 36, one of ten Bosnian Croats who surrendered to UN forces on Monday, repeated "not guilty" in confident tones to each of 13 charges of crimes against humanity that were read to him in the courtroom in The Hague.

Last Monday's detention of Mr Kordic and the other nine, who also entered not guilty pleas, was a big advance for The Hague tribunal, which

had so far taken only ten suspects into custody out of 77. Two have been convicted. Almost all of those still at large



Kordic charged with supervising killings

are Bosnian Serbs. Intense American diplomatic pressure on President Tudjman of Croatia is deemed to have led to the surrender of Mr Kordic and his "compatriots". Mr Kordic had until recent months lived openly in Zagreb, the Croatian capital.

The ten said before their surrender that they had agreed to stand trial in return for a promise of speedy proceedings and all insisted that they could prove their innocence. "My conscience is clear before God and before the Croatian people," Mr Kordic said before boarding a Dutch military plane at Split.

Mr Kordic, a former senior political leader of the self-proclaimed Bosnian Croat republic, is accused of command-

ing the operation that drove Muslims from the central Lasya Valley in 1992 and 1993. His men conducted "systematic and wanton" bombing and burning of at least 14 Muslim towns, the indictment says.

Hundreds of people were killed, according to the indictment, and thousands of Muslims were taken to detention camps, all under Mr Kordic's direction. He is also accused of organising paramilitary squads that had orders to "kill, terrorise or demoralise" Muslims.

Six of the accused are said to have taken part in an attack on the village of Ahmici in 1993, the scene of the worst massacre in Mr Kordic's alleged campaign of "ethnic cleansing". More than 100



Muslims were killed by gunfire or shelling. Every Muslim-owned house and two mosques were destroyed.

No date for a trial was set. If convicted, the men face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Officials at The Hague tribunal have denied Croatian claims that the

men had been assured that they would be tried within three to five months. The court is already trying another Bosnian Croat, Tihomir Blaskic, a general who is also accused of commanding "ethnic cleansing" operations. Zlatko Aleksovski, another Bosnian Croat cited in the Kordic indictment, is in tribunal custody awaiting trial.

The detention of the ten Croats has served to undermine the argument of the Bosnian Serbs that they are being unfairly targeted by the tribunal.

There are no signs, however, that Radovan Karadzic, the former Bosnian Serb leader, and Ratko Mladic, his military chief during the war, are any closer to being detained.

Yeltsin security officer 'bugged corrupt aides'

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

SENIOR Russian figures, including ministers and close aides of President Yeltsin, have been accused of corruption and betrayal by a former intelligence officer who bugged and monitored their activities for years on behalf of the Kremlin leader.

Colonel Valeri Streletsky, who headed a secret investigative department inside the Presidential Security Service, said yesterday that he had collected material that compromised some of the most powerful figures in Russia.

Earlier this year General Aleksandr Kozhakov, Mr Yeltsin's former bodyguard and friend, published an explosive best-seller revealing intimate details of life inside the Kremlin and in particular the Russian leader's battle with alcoholism. The book has sold half a million copies.

Colonel Streletsky was General Kozhakov's most trusted subordinate and headed a department, which bugged the phones of ministers and senior officials. He plans to publish a book next year.

In an interview with the *Moskovsky Komsomolets*, the former KGB officer said that he had decided to go public with the material because he "felt obliged to tell people what was going on in the corridors of power". Among other allegations, he charged that Maksim Boiko, a deputy Prime Minister in charge of privatisation, had changed his name from Shambert, that he had secretly obtained an American "green card" and that his father was in America teaching at an academy run by the CIA.

In another damaging charge, he alleged that Sergei Filatov, the former head of the presidential administration,

had personal ties with a reputed mafia boss who had paid for the construction of a million-dollar dacha outside Moscow for him.

Colonel Streletsky said that his spies had uncovered at least two senior government figures and one member of the presidential administration, who were co-operating with foreign intelligence services.

He also claimed to have evidence that many top officials have secretly siphoned money into foreign bank accounts and alleged that Oleg Davydov, the former Minister for Foreign Economic Relations, had accounts in America and Poland.

"When Kozhakov found the material he sent it to Yeltsin, but usually no action was taken," the colonel said.

His critics charge that his allegations are politically motivated and aimed at damaging the young reformers running the Government.

Asked to respond to the allegations during a parliamentary debate yesterday, Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, said: "I do not read that newspaper."



Kozhakov: revealed secrets from Kremlin

Villagers hail chief suspect in Bosnia atrocity as martyr

FROM TOM WALKER IN AHMICI

IN THE Croatian pockets lining central Bosnia's Lasya valley yesterday, Dario Kordic, the biggest catch yet for the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague, has already been accorded the status of martyr.

In his hometown of Busovaca, a huge poster of Mr Kordic flutters alongside a large photograph of Tihomir Blaskic, his friend and general of the Bosnian Croat Army. Further up the valley, above the ruins of Ahmici — a Muslim-dominated town that both are accused of razing to the ground — Croats plead the innocence of their leader. "He sat once in my garden," said

Katica, who recently returned from Germany to her house overlooking Ahmici. "There was no massacre here, the Muslims started it all. They told us from their mosque that we were besieged."

This is not the version told by Western witnesses to the horrors of the Muslim-Croat civil war in central Bosnia in the spring of 1993. They describe how more than 100 Muslims were trapped inside their houses and burnt alive by a Croat militia egged on by the political ambitions of Mr Kordic and his colleagues in the Croat Nationalist Party.

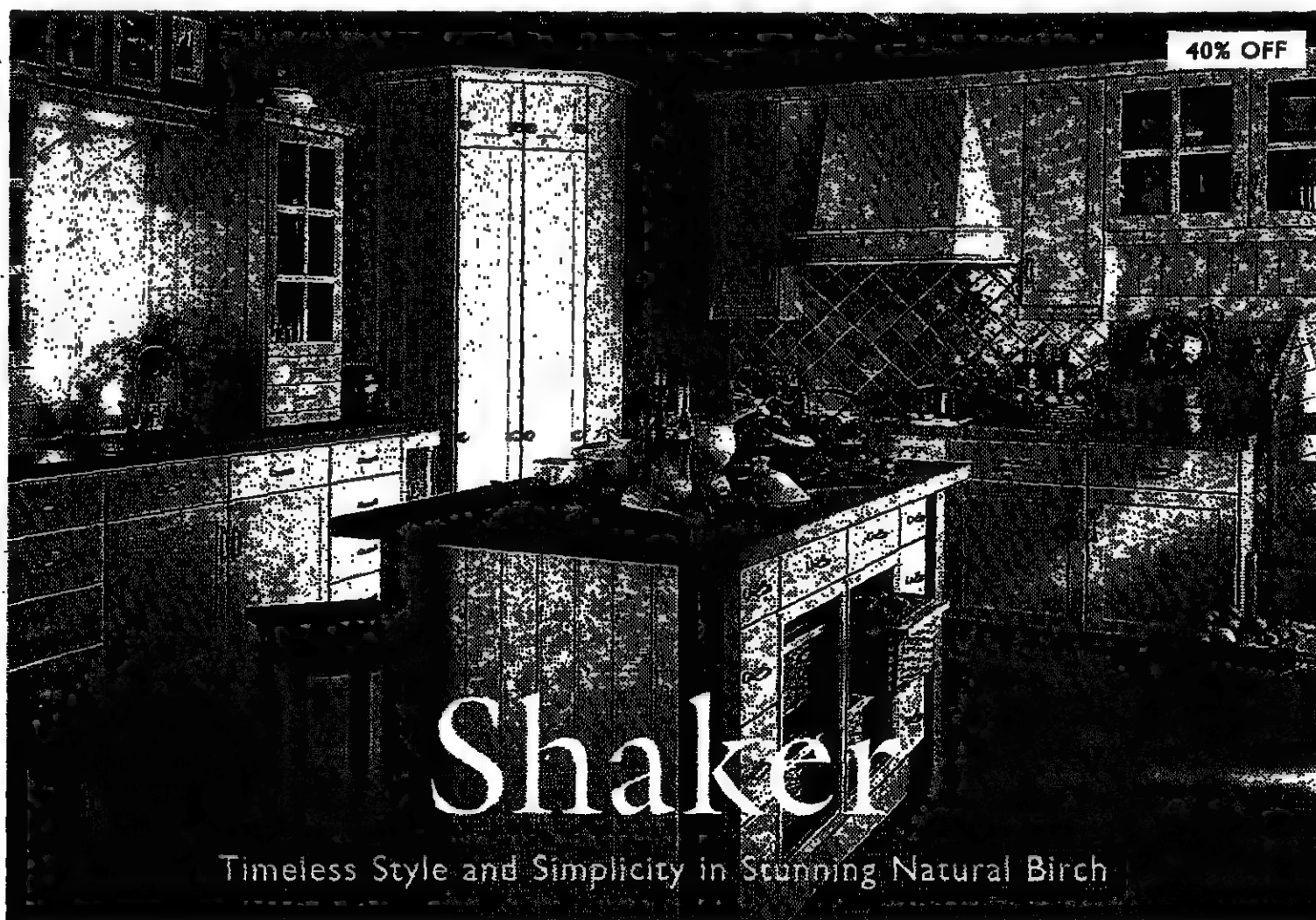
Since the "massacre" whose "grizzly results" were uncovered by British troops with the former United Nations Protection Force,

Ahmici has remained a ghost town. Burnt-out houses lie in ruins and acres of fields and orchards abandoned. The mosque is split in two by its fallen minaret, and daubed with obscene graffiti.

The Croat returnees living on the slopes above Ahmici do not allow their children to go near the ruins. Further north, in Vitez, Croats tell of evil spirits haunting Ahmici, of screams of mothers and babies in the night.

Back in Busovaca, the café gossip is of betrayal — not by the West, but by Croatia. Mr Kordic and nine other Bosnian Croats went to The Hague after pressure from President Tudjman of Croatia who is anxious to secure IMF and World Bank funds.

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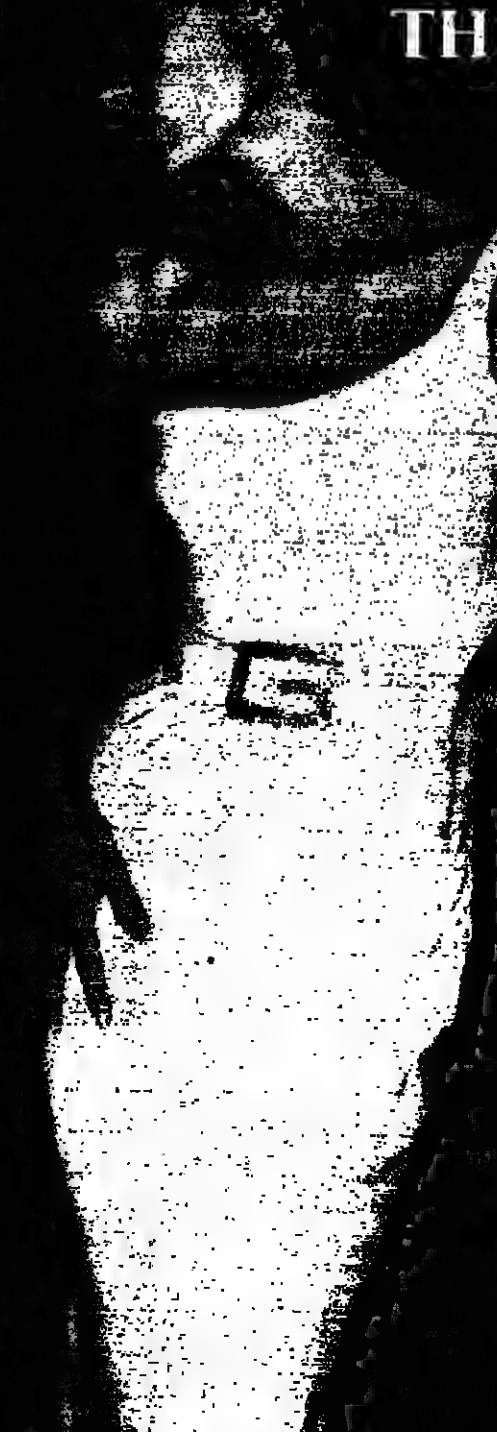
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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

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shattered economy and cope
with widespread hunger that
has forced the fiercely inde-
pendent state to appeal for
international aid.

The central committee and
central military commission
solemnly declare that the great
leader, Kim Jong Il, has been
officially elected to be general
secretary of our party," the
Korean Central News Agency
said in a report monitored
here.

The statement said Mr Kim
had "trained our people as an
independent people with in-
dimitable faith and will, and
has opened a new era of the
nation's prosperity, with tire-
less revolutionary activities
over the past 30-odd years."

Planning for a dynastic
succession — unprecedented
in a socialist country — began
in 1974, when Mr Kim Jr was
elected a member of the cen-
tral committee's political com-
mittee. In 1991, he was
appointed supreme com-
mander of the Korean People's
Army, and two years later
chairman of the National De-
fence Commission, with total
control of the 1.1 million-
strong armed forces.

Since the death in July 1994
of Kim Il Sung, the "Great
Leader", the posts of party
chief and state secretary had
remained vacant, although
Mr Kim Jr was running the
country. The customary two-
year mourning period was
extended a further year, amid
speculation about Mr Kim's
difficulty in cementing his
power base.

Kim Il Sung's legitimacy
was based on his legendary
exploits as an anti-Japanese
freedom fighter, while his son

could only play the "filial
piety" card to justify his inher-
itance.

The process of formally
anointing the "Dear Leader"
was launched last month
when local party chapters and
the military adopted resolu-
tions endorsing Mr Kim as
ruling party head.

North Korea watchers pre-
dict that Mr Kim will also
inherit his late father's title of
President on September 9 next
year, when North Korea cele-
brates the 50th anniversary of
its founding.

Mr Kim's son, Kim Jong
Nam, 26, is in turn being
groomed as his successor,
according to Japanese sources.

Seoul: South and North
Korea concluded a landmark
agreement to allow commer-
cial airlines to overfly each
other's territory for the first
time since their division in
1945, officials said. (AFP)



No dissenters here: North Korean military men unanimously acclaim a resolution paving the way for Mr Kim's takeover of the party



Kim: hard pressed by economic difficulties

Tung promises Hong Kong 'era of compassion'

FROM JONATHAN MORSKY IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG'S Chief Exe-
cutive, Tung Chee-hwa, yester-
day confirmed a date for
elections as he outlined plans
for the former British colony's
first five years under Chinese
rule.

In the first annual policy
address to the Legislative
Council in Chinese, Mr Tung
promised a "brave new era" of
capitalism, with a compas-
sionate face. The measures to
include new housing, roads
and railways will cost
HK\$88 billion (£7.2 billion).

The focus of his two-hour
speech was on the economy,
social problems and bread-
and-butter issues. Out of 150
paragraphs he devoted two to
Hong Kong's political future,
which he hoped might see a
fully elected legislature and
chief executive within ten
years. "We will work steadily
towards the long-term objec-
tive of having a chief execu-
tive and a legislature elected
by universal suffrage," Mr
Tung said. One sentence re-
ferred to the status of women.

The elections for the Leg-
islative Council — next May —
will turn back the clock on
reforms instigated by Chris-
tina Patten, the former Governor,
which gave every Hong Kong
adult a vote. Next year 20
candidates will emerge from a

proportional representation
system which will effectively
cut in half the number of
democrats and independents
who sat in the Legislative
Council until the July 1
handover; the other 40 will
come from categories for
which not many citizens will
be permitted a vote.

Martin Lee, the Chairman
of the Democratic Party, said
he was disappointed. "It
seems he is living in another
world," he said. "He doesn't
even realise the aspirations of
Hong Kong people."

The plan sees all Hong
Kong people in decent homes
in 10 years; boost welfare for
the elderly; promote family
values and Chinese culture;
raise education standards;
and put every home, busi-
ness and school on the Internet.

Although he was careful
not to speak of Beijing's
approval — and speaking to
reporters later Mr Tung said
he had not sought it — he
reminded his audience that
Hong Kong had rejoined
China with which its future
was now wholly entwined. It
was time for Hong Kong to
"break free from the psycho-
logical constraints of colonial-
ism" and to start making a
new history.

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'They say I'm going to die'



In Day Five of the du Pré memoir, Piers du Pré felt like a traitor when he left his desperately ill sister alone in New York

Jackie knew that most of the "cures" suggested were useless, but she still felt that some were worth trying. The Rockefeller Institute in New York was pioneering a treatment using oxygen, and Jackie's doctor advised her that this might be helpful. Even though she hated travelling, Jackie left London in a hopeful frame of mind. Despite problems with her legs, she managed to walk to the plane unaided.

A few days later, she telephoned and launched into the whole miserable story: the treatment was painful, she had no one to visit her; she felt isolated and lonely. "How soon can you come over? Bar, I'm dying to see you. Please say you can come?"

Somehow I reorganised my life to spend four nights in New York. I telephoned the moment I arrived. "Hi Jacks. Guess where I am."

"Bar, are you really in New York?"

"Yes. And I can be with you within the hour."

In my excitement, I chatted on for a few moments until I realised that she was completely silent. "Jacks, are you still there?"

Then I realised she was crying. She wept and wept. As I walked through the front door, I was immediately aware of that ghastly hospital smell of antiseptic. There was a hushed atmosphere which made me self-conscious as I crept along the corridor, searching for Jackie's room.

I tried to feel positive and look bright, but, as I neared Jackie's door, I became anxious and I feared that I would not be able to keep a brave face. I stood outside, practising my happy smile.

As I opened the door, I felt my throat tighten. I had wanted to do something funny, make her laugh. But instead I just went straight over to her and hugged her and hugged her, not least to hide my face, which was now crumpled with tears. We just held each other and sobbed. After what seemed ages, Jackie began to speak.

"I'm going to die," she said. "The doctors have told me I'm going to die. And I can't walk any more. And they say I'm going to go mad. I'm not mad am I? Am I mad already?"

This was so incredibly different from the tough exterior of "Jackie coping" that she

usually presented. She used to brush the disease to one side, joking about it, saying how much more fortunate she was than others. But now her true feelings of helplessness, frustration, loneliness and fear of dying were overwhelming her. Jackie was on death row.

The doctors in England had been overprotective. They hadn't told her about the progression of MS. It was becoming clear that, in Jackie's case, the disease was advancing at a much faster pace. It seemed to me that the American doctors had inadvertently painted a full picture, and she had been left to face up to all this, on her own, in a hospital miles from home. She was defeated by fear, and was spending hours thinking about every symptom.

That evening, a car took us to the Russian Tea Room. The doctors had forbidden Jackie to drink alcohol and had put her on a strict diet. But I knew she would disregard this and I was right. Jackie ordered a large vodka.

We spent the whole evening giggling and laughing, drinking "Navy Grog" while Jackie mimicked the doctors.

The next day I wheeled her downstairs for her occupational-therapy class. It was in a long, narrow room, with brightly painted walls and was packed with the fastest and most helpless, sad-looking people I had ever seen. They sat in rows, monotonously and silently punching holes into leather belts. A strident voice called out to us. "Please take the place at the corner on the second table on the left and continue with yesterday's work. I'll be over in a minute to see how you're getting on."

Everyone stared at us as we took our places.

"Let's see how clever we can be today," said the nurse in well-meaning, yet condescending tones.

Jackie obediently picked up her tools and set to work. But I couldn't. Instead, anger and frustration welled up within me. Jackie looked utterly beaten and helpless. Her vibrant personality and great talent had been beaten into submission and locked into a cage. I could take no more. Without a word, I wheeled her straight back to her room. I was never going to allow anyone to subject my sister to such degradation ever again.



Jackie and Piers: "She was desperate to leave. But it was not to be. After one of those special long family hugs, I returned to the States. No more. I should have remained in the hospital."



Not long afterwards, a nurse and two men came in, pushing a trolley. On it was a light blue rubber contraption, with some electrical equipment with wires, gauges and a hosepipe.

I challenged them immediately. "What on earth is this for?"

This is going to help Miss du Pré to walk. It's a suit that she wears, rather like a wetsuit. These things are like small hoistropes which run vertically up and down on the outside. We pump compressed air into the tubes. Since she can't use her legs, they stiffen the suit, which then holds her up. It helps her to walk again.

The suit had been made especially for her and had to fit exactly to be effective. Standing up allows gravity to try to drain blood from the body to the legs. The leg muscles prevent this. But Jackie's muscles could no longer prevent the draining, and consequent-

ly it was a tremendous strain for her heart to keep pumping sufficient blood to her brain. By making the leggings fit tightly and increasing the "squeeze" with air pressure, they hoped to keep the blood flowing through her body.

Jackie lay flat on her back as they dressed her in the suit. It seemed to take forever. Then, connecting the hose to the unit, they plugged in the compressor, and switched on. The motor buzzed, and the pressure gauge began to climb.

As the tubes filled with air, Jackie became more and more rigid. I couldn't believe what I was witnessing. It was like something out of a horror film. They helped her into a sitting position; all three of them had to hold her up. As the suit became fully inflated, they gently inched her off the bed until her feet were touching the floor. The compressor was now labouring to push the last little bit of air into the tubes. Finally, the nurses hoisted Jackie to a standing position. "Try using your legs," they urged, again and again. "I can't," said Jackie impatiently.

I stared in amazement. My sister, looking like the Michelin Man, was being pushed around the room.

That evening we went back to the Russian Tea Room and had more vodka, more rich food and more laughter. The moment was drawing close when we would have to say goodbye. Our last day together was over.

I was fighting the feeling that I should rescue her. I wanted to take her back home with me. She was desperate to leave. But it was not to be. After one of those special, long family hugs, I turned and left her. No words. I hesitated when I got to the lift. The pull to fetch her was huge.

As the lift slowly took me to the ground floor, I could hold it no longer. I had to allow the intense grief and pent-up emotion of the last few days to show itself. I almost ran out of the hospital. A cab took me to the Berkshire Hotel where I picked up my suitcase and left for the airport.

I felt like a traitor.

© Hilary and Piers du Pré 1997

Extracted from A Genius in the Family, by Hilary and Piers du Pré, published by Chatto & Windus at £15.99. Readers can buy a copy for £14.99 by calling The Times Bookshop on 0900 134459.

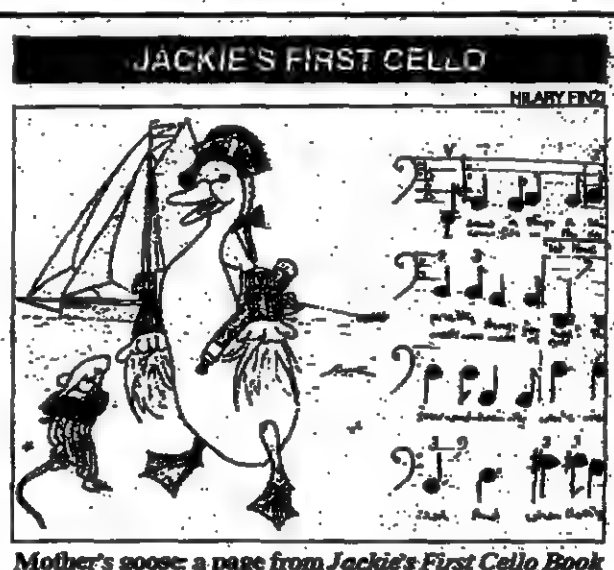
TOMORROW

"Even in death, this once vital and powerful personality was still tying me up in emotional knots"

HILARY: From as early as I can remember, Mum was always singing, playing the piano, clapping and stepping rhythms. As she played, we would skip and dance around the room, making shapes in the air according to the phrase shapes. At night, the strains of Mum's playing filled our room.

One day Jackie was in the kitchen with Mum. Children's Hour was presenting a programme about the instruments of the orchestra. The flute, oboe and clarinet all had their turn. As the sound of a cello filled the room, Jackie listened, transfixed, then said: "Mummy, I want to make that sound."

On the eve of Jackie's fifth birthday, Mum left a three-quarter-size cello at the end of her bed. Jackie woke the whole household as she rushed out of her



Mother's goose: a page from Jackie's First Cello Book

room, shouting at the top of her voice. "Mummy... wake up. Come and see. There's a whopping creature in my room!" Jackie had never seen anyone play the cello and

laughed Mum. "Stroke the string with the bow, like this." Mum guided Jackie's hand, drawing the bow slowly across the D-string. The cello began to sing. For a while, the sound seemed suspended in silence. No one moved. "I can do it. I can do it," Jackie shrieked.

In the absence of suitable cello music for very small children, Mum composed pieces for Jackie, calling the collection Jackie's First Cello Book. Each piece was illustrated with a drawing and a story, all suited to five-year-olds. Mum would leave the notebook at the end of Jackie's bed while she was asleep. In the morning, Jackie would find her new piece and Mum would be woken by an excited child, tugging at her nightdress. "Mummy, wake up. I want to try my new piece."

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Living with a...

Dr Thomas Stuttford reports from his hospital bed on how he ended up on the operating table after an old friend consulted him about tiredness

How a friend saved me from prostate cancer

It is a week since Roger Kirby, an international urological surgeon, looked at me and said: "There you are Tom, I told you that a radical prostatectomy is no big deal."

I was by then out of intensive care. My oxygen mask had been discarded, and the only evidence of surgery visible to any visitor were two drains. Roger was right. Less than three days after the operation, I was even able to enjoy watching the last day of the Labour Party conference.

I would have been deafened by the intriguing experience of being in, rather than beside, the hospital bed if George, my oldest friend, had not consulted me. George, who works 12 hours a day, had been feeling increasingly tired since January and has also noticed increasing indigestion. Both symptoms had previously been attributed either to his high blood pressure or the treatment being used to bring it down.

That same treatment was also thought to account for the very mild urinary tract symptoms — which involved nothing more than having to urinate more often, and having to get up at night — that had been apparent for a month or two.

Routine checks showed that George's symptoms were not related to his blood pressure but to well-established cancer of the prostate. He is now responding excellently to hormonal treatment.

If George, a contemporary, had this trouble, wasn't I being arrogant in not taking my own advice, so often recommended in this column, by having my PSA assessed?

The PSA is a blood test that helps distinguish benign from malignant prostate enlargement. An important, and not entirely resolved, diagnostic problem doctors face is detecting prostate cancer at an early stage so that the tumour may

be entirely eradicated. In George's case, as in most, the cancer had already spread beyond the prostate gland by the time it was detected.

The PSA is not perfect — it gives rise to too many false positive readings, so that patients with benign enlargement of the gland are recommended uncomfortable follow-up examinations. There are also a few cases of false negative PSA results, when cancer is present but not suspected.

My PSA, like George's, was

The doctor and I looked at the screen. 'That could be malignant, Tom,' he said

raised — fortunately, only to 8.8, but the usually accepted upper limit of normality is four. My readings were particularly suspicious because the fraction of the PSA labelled free PSA was four times higher than was acceptable. When the balance between total PSA and free PSA is abnormal, suspicions are aroused.

Roger Kirby arranged for the transrectal ultrasound of the prostate, and biopsy, particularly of any doubtful areas. The ultrasound located a spot about a centimetre in diameter that looked abnormal. I looked at the screen with the radiologist who had pointed out the area. "That Tom, could be malignant," he said.

"Possibly, or probably?"

"Probably," he replied. Biopsy showed that he was right.

After the initial diagnosis, further tests, scans of the pelvis and all the body's bones

to exclude any secondary growth is necessary. A cardiac assessment, together with other blood tests, is also recommended to make certain the patient is fit enough for surgery if it is advised. "Despite several risk factors, your heart is in good order," the doctor told me. "Aah — that may be the result of an aspirin and half a bottle of claret daily."

I was lucky to know Roger Kirby and be able to ask for his help. And equally fortunate to have as my anaesthetist Dr Peter Amoroso.

In addition, I was in a London clinic that is accustomed to dealing with radical prostatectomies and whose nurses are, therefore, as efficient and expert as they are kindly.

No one, however, warned me about genital swelling. As a student I remember pictures of African tribesmen whose testicles were so enlarged by filariasis that one had needed a wheelbarrow. I was not quite as bad as that but the largest Tudor codpiece or the baggiest Armani suit would not have allowed me to wear trousers. I was relieved to think that having spent a little time in a Scottish regiment I had a tartan, and would have been entitled to wear a kilt.

Other than that, at least in my case, the radical prostatectomy had been "no big deal". But when PSA testing becomes well established, as it undoubtedly will, and the clamour for the operation becomes irresistible, it may well demonstrate a shortage of surgeons and anaesthetists with the appropriate skills.

Worryingly, others, masters in their own field, but perhaps inexperienced in radical prostatectomies, may be tempted to have a go; in these circumstances the operation may well become a very big deal indeed in some cases. The answer to this problem clearly lies in the development of regional specialist centres.



Dr Thomas Stuttford: "Wasn't I being arrogant in not having my own PSA assessed?"

The killer that we neglected

Doctors at the Institute of Cancer Research, which works alongside the Royal Marsden Hospital, estimate that unless new treatments are found the number of deaths from prostate cancer in the UK will rise from the present 10,000 a year to 20,000 a year within a generation.

Professor Colin Cooper of the Institute said: "Prostate cancer has been neglected. Often it is perceived as the disease of old men who do not have long to live, so it has not been attacked with the same urgency as, for instance, cancer of the breast or cervix." Cancer of the prostate can strike a man in his forties, although this is rare; but even a patient of 60 or 70 might have expected to live for another 15 or 20 years.

The symptoms of the benign enlargement of the prostate which is an inevitable part of ageing are well known: but these same symptoms, usually to a lesser extent, also cause suspicion of cancer of the prostate.

When discussing urinary tract symptoms doctors always ask their patients three salient questions. Do you get up at night to pass water? Is your urinary flow slow? Are you in any way bothered by bladder function? Further questions often reveal that the patient may have intermittent urination, that their flow is very slow and they can't dawdle on the way to the loo.

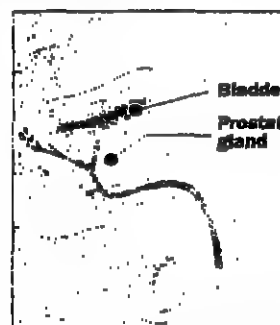
Patients who wait for these symptoms before they have a PSA test (see left) may be waiting too long. Neither my friend George nor I had much in the way of symptoms.

Rectal examinations reveal only 40 per cent of cases of cancer of the prostate. Even high-tech ultrasound misses 25 per cent, and the PSA test's problems are well known. The standard regular testing should, in my opinion (but not that of all professionals), be a combination of all three techniques. In my case not only was I virtually symptom free but physical examination failed to reveal any tumour.

If it hadn't been for the good George coming to my rescue, and the PSA test, the two tumours in my prostate would have remained undetected until the spread of the disease had made the symptoms unmistakable. Once the cancer has ceased to be local loss of weight, tiredness, aches and pains in the bones and joints are the obvious symptoms. By this time treatment options have narrowed.

As it is, post-operative examination of my prostate and its adjacent tissues show there is a very good chance I will live my allotted span.

When cancer of the prostate is detected what is the treatment of choice? There are still advocates of "watchful waiting", a euphemism for doing nothing until there is evidence of spread. Thereafter the symptoms can be dealt with as they arise. The Institute of Cancer Research, in its booklet *The Male Cancers — A Hidden Problem*, says that this results in seven out of ten patients



eventually dying from the disease. In contrast, more than eight out of ten patients in whom the tumour is detected early are alive and well ten years later. It is of course impossible to say how many would have lived anyway.

Early cancer of the prostate can be treated with surgery, radical prostatectomy, or radical radiotherapy. I favoured surgery because I like to think that my body is now rid of its malignant cells, whereas these may often be detected by biopsy after radiation.

Recently researchers at the Institute have introduced "conformal" radiation in which the radiating beams are shaped to the outline of a specific tumour so that a larger dose can be applied. It is hoped that this and similar advances, together with earlier diagnosis, will help to reverse the increasing death rate from this cancer.

EARLIER this year a 60-year-old man was diagnosed as suffering from early cancer of the prostate. The patient had a successful operation after which the surgeon suggested that if he had a brother he, too, should be tested. "I've only one and he's just 47," the patient replied. Advised that middle age was no protection, his brother was tested and found to have a raised PSA (see above). The diagnosis was confirmed, he was scanned and was ready for surgery just in time to take over the fraternal bed.

Both my father's brothers died in their early 60s from prostate surgery, and my

Investigating the genetic link

father, too, died of prostatic disease at the age of 80. There is a genetic link in cancer of the prostate. The Prostate Cancer Charitable Trust is giving the Institute of Cancer Research \$300,000 over the next three years to investigate it.

There are probably two types of prostatic cancer-carrying genes. High risk genes, such as those which can lead to several cases of breast cancer in the same family,

and lower penetrative genes, which carry a lesser likelihood of causing trouble.

Cancer is usually a disease of late middle or old age. As well as cancer of the prostate running in families, it has other characteristic epidemiological features. The typical patient is an elderly, urban man living in a highly developed Western country who always ate well, but didn't eat up his green vegetables or have fruit, started his sex life early and later had many sexual partners.

© The Institute of Cancer Research, Royal Cancer Hospital, 17a Onslow Gardens, London SW7 3AL. 0171-878 3810

Ending the taboo

THIRTY years ago, doctors advocating mammography and cervical screening had an uphill task to convince colleagues of the need for these services, and to persuade people to discuss the subjects openly. After he had testicular cancer, the jockey Bob Champion encouraged other men to talk freely about the condition.

Prostatic cancer, on the other hand, is still not discussed. It is potentially lethal. The prostate, a gland which surrounds the urethra, lies at the bottom of the pelvis between the root of the penis and the anus. This makes it an unlikely subject of polite conversation. The gland secretes semen, and the PSA which doctors so diligently measure is the enzyme which liquefies this semen. Little wonder that research into the prostate is not a favourite object of charity.

Because of the variable prognosis of cancer of the prostate, some patients will live for 20 years even without surgery or irradiation. But this does little to help them in the eyes of their bank managers, insurance companies or colleagues.

Not only is cancer of the prostate seldom talked about and its charities rarely contributed to; it is also the subject of misunderstanding and, in many cases, unnecessary dread.

In the best hands, radical prostatic surgery causes urinary incontinence in less than 4 per cent of cases. Overall, this complication occurs in 10 to 20 per cent of those operated on. Since the introduction of new techniques, anal incontinence is now so rare as not to be a concern.

Of those men who have had surgery, half can resume some sort of sexual activity.

Are you living with a killer?

Heart and circulatory disease claims more lives than any other cause, affecting both men and women. But you don't have to be a victim. If you have any of these symptoms, there are positive steps you can take TODAY to feel better and live longer!

ANGINA A diagnosis of angina is NOT a death sentence — our free leaflets can help you avoid much of the pain and disability of the condition.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE Your blood pressure is one warning of your risk of heart disease or stroke. There are many ways to lower blood pressure — find out if there's more you could be doing.

CHOLESTEROL Most people in the UK have higher than recommended cholesterol levels. You can lower your cholesterol without cutting out the things you enjoy — let us show you how.

HORMONAL CHANGES The menopause increases women's risk of heart disease to almost equal that of men. Heart and circulatory disease is the single greatest killer of women — but many women and their doctors are unaware of the risks.

STRESS If you already have a heart problem, stress can be a serious threat. Coping with a busy schedule and problems at work or in the home could increase your risk of a heart attack.



Find out how to help protect your heart with our FREE information service.

Registered Charity No. 22971

Feel better live longer — tick the free information you'd like to receive.

Reducing the risk of a heart attack: ☐ Is it blood pressure? ☐ Name (Mr/Ms/Ms) (Please use block capitals)

Advice and recipes for healthy eating: ☐ High blood cholesterol ☐ Address

Smoking and your heart: ☐ What is angina? ☐

Exercise for life: ☐ Women and heart ☐

☐ Disease ☐ Postcode

These leaflets / information packs are offered free of charge as part of the British Heart Foundation's campaign to improve the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of all forms of heart and circulatory disease. We are a charity and would welcome your donation — please make cheques payable to British Heart Foundation. Thank you so much.

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CHANGING TIMES

Defend our Parliament from Blair

Robert Cranborne tells Tories to resist a latter-day Lloyd George

If we believe in the importance of the nation state, we should begin to think of ways to reinvigorate Parliament. In order to clarify once again the chain through which the electorate gives the authority to govern, Tony Blair has not made our task any easier. In opposition he exploited a few unsavoury incidents to demean the whole standing of Parliamentary politics. In government, his rhetoric asserts that under our present constitution the Government is not sufficiently accountable — or close enough — to the people.

Funnily enough, I rather agree with him about that. The communications revolution, the power of the papers and people's laudably part-time interest in politics have made the institutions of government seem slow to react. It is also true that the very dominance of Westminster and Whitehall is self-defeating.

However, Mr Blair is seeking to build institutions that will diminish Parliament. He is seeking, too, to replace the existing chain of authority with a new chain, in which the ultimate voice lies not on the floor of the House of Commons, but behind the closed doors of Downing Street. When he talks of accountability, we should look for the counting house and who controls it.

For what is he actually doing? He is establishing a parliament in Edinburgh and, possibly, an assembly in Wales. The creation of a Scottish Parliament unequivocally withdraws authority from Westminster and breaks the chain of authority. But it will do more. It is bound to challenge Westminster — and it will look for allies, most obviously those who dream of a Europe of the regions. For if each region of our country were to forge direct and increasingly powerful links with Brussels, then that would enable the Commission to bypass Westminster and so weaken the accountability Mr Blair says he is keen to promote.

Mr Blair also talks about reforming Parliament. Again, what is he actually doing? First, he is making authoritarian use of pre-legislative referendums to intimidate Parliament and undermine its independent power of judgment. This is a new phenomenon in Britain — though the pages of the 20th century are littered with discreditable and disturbing parallels.

I am duly conscious of the result of the election in May. It is clear that Scotland will be a parliament and will have it. But I do not believe that a sovereign parliament should be constrained in every detail of its judgment by ad hoc pre-legislative referendums. And, if we are to have more referendums, then I would ask that proper ground rules should be laid out and legislated for in Parliament. These would exclude the kind of one-sided publicity we saw in the referendums last month.

Secondly, Mr Blair plans to remove the only truly independent element left in Parliament, the hereditary peerage, without telling us what stage two of his reform of the Upper House would look like. Just as in 1911 when it suited Lloyd

George, so it would suit Mr Blair to let the promise of stage two hang in the air for another 80-odd years. Since an independent Parliament is an inconvenience for Mr Blair, he finds us Lords inconvenient. But he must be confronted with a question, to be repeated and repeated, not in the interests of a hereditary peerage, but in the interests of Parliament. "If you do away with half the House of Lords, what will you have in its place?"

Thirdly, he is introducing proportional representation step by step. For the Scottish and Welsh parliaments, for Europe. Perhaps, even for local councils. He is toying with a referendum for PR for Westminster itself, the prospect that truly excites the imagination of Mr Ashdown, more than an hour's chat in the Cabinet Room. Whether history would show Mr Ashdown to have been an aspirant coalition Foreign Secretary — imagine his forceful negotiations in Brussels — or merely the last of the 20th century's useful idiots, I hope we shall never know. For Mr Blair seems to be in particular attracted by the Party, or Alternative, List system. I am not at all surprised.

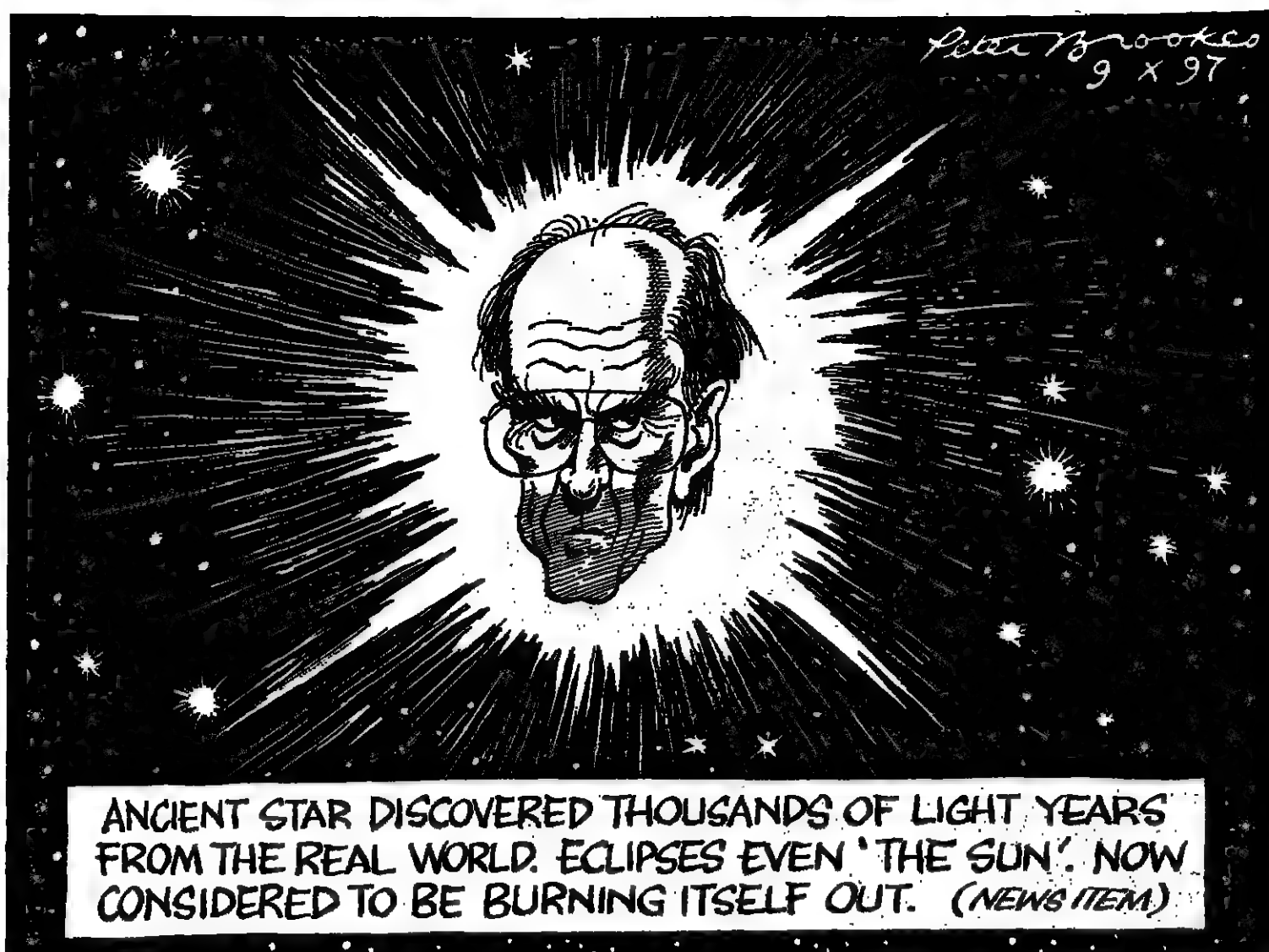
The Party List system is, of all the PR systems, the one that places the greatest degree of power in the hands of the party apparatus and removes the greatest degree of independence from MPs. Again, since Mr Blair seems to find Parliament inconvenient, that would suit him very well. It would enable him to forge a centre grouping, independent of Parliament and of the constituencies, which would make that old coalition master Lloyd George green with envy in his grave.

PR in this model would take the choice of government away from the people and put it in the hands of party secretaries. I cannot say in smoke-filled rooms, for these are men who are pure of heart and politically correct — but far, far removed from the eyes or the reach of the people. Once again I ask — where is the true accountability there?

A great political party reveals its greatness, not in victory, but in defeat. From now on, we have to prove our greatness as a party. For we have a great challenge before us — the greatest for many years. But I cannot see a party in the country other than the Conservative Party with the traditions and the beliefs to undertake this task.

We did it in 1922, when we defeated Mr Blair's hero Lloyd George's attempt to govern after emasculating Parliament. Let us hope that a future 1997 Committee will be as effective as the 1922 Committee has been so far. Then Mr Blair's flirtation with coalition and his quest for a "new politics", dominated by his personality and his narrow circle, may end, not in the breaking of the Conservative Party, but in the breaking of his own, just as Lloyd George broke his.

Lord Cranborne is Conservative Leader in the Lords. The above is extracted from this evening's *Teddy Lecture* at the Clifton Hotel, Blackpool.



ANCIENT STAR DISCOVERED THOUSANDS OF LIGHT YEARS FROM THE REAL WORLD. ECLIPSES EVEN 'THE SUN'. NOW CONSIDERED TO BE BURNING ITSELF OUT. (NEWS ITEM)

Young man in no hurry

Hague is tough and could build a formidable team — don't underrate him

The best rule in political forecasting is that the next election, when it is still four years away, can never be far from an even bet. No doubt it looks at present that Labour is certain to win the next election; it is not Events, personalities, the economic cycle and public rule could all move against the Government. The Conservative conference expressed its anger yesterday. In a couple of years they could well have become an effective Opposition. The history of elections in the 20th century shows no close correlation between the result of one election and that of the next.

Several factors could swing in favour of the Conservatives. The first is the Labour Party itself. Tony Blair has imposed a radical change of policy which is contrary to the party's traditions. Roy Hattersley, who used to be regarded as right wing, has not changed his views, but the leadership has moved the party so far that he is now on the left wing. So long as he is now on the left wing, this will not threaten the Prime Minister's position. But if the tide of popularity turns, for whatever reason, there will be many who will blame Tony Blair for having betrayed his party's principles. I myself admire Tony Blair and what he is doing, but I come from a family which supported Charles I, Lord North — perhaps mistakenly — the great Lord Salisbury and Baroness Thatcher. There may be something odd about a Labour leader whom I admire and Roy Hattersley opposes.

The personalities of the Labour leadership seem quite likely to become discordant, particularly under pressure. If Tony Blair were not there to keep the choir singing in unison, with Peter Mandelson as his assistant, the gleeful club of Brown, Cook and Prescott would probably fall out of tune. Certainly none of those three could be expected to give way to the pretensions of the others. A party which has changed its basic philosophy, and in personal terms is a patchwork of old and new, may sail ahead in fair weather but capsize in a storm. That happens in politics.

By an enormous margin, the country now prefers Tony Blair to William Hague. In my view Mr Blair is a very superior performer "a class act"; he makes Hague look raw and inexperienced, which he is. But I think Mr Hague is being underrated. He reminds me in some ways of the young Ted Heath: he too was rather callow; he did have more experience

as a politician than Hague; he was nothing like as good a speaker, though he has become an excellent speaker in his old age. What he has in common with Hague is that neither has an easygoing personality. The public does not see them as cosy, though I think the young Hague is better liked than the young Heath.

I remember discussing the Heath-Maudslough leadership election of 1965 with Roy Hattersley. He said: "What you mean is that Reggie is a friendly, lazy old dog who likes to lie in front of the fire, but Ted is a snappy little terrier who may bark at you, but will run after a rabbit."

Harold Wilson's 1966 election victory, many people wrote off Heath, but he won in 1970. Hague seems to me to be tough-minded, energetic, modern, probably rather ruthless, like one of the young brigadiers of the Second World War. Such men are not widely loved, but they get more business done than gentler souls. Blair may be more the electorate's cup of tea, but the next election will not be a tea party.

There is another resemblance to Heath's position after 1966. He had Alec Douglas-Home as his Shadow Foreign Secretary. Home was always weak on domestic policy, had not lasted long as Prime Minister and had lost the 1964 election. But the nation liked and trusted him. When John Major was Prime Minister I was a hostile critic, as I had been of Home when he was Prime Minister. Yet the nation likes and trusts Major, whether or not he was a good Prime Minister. He has promised in Blackpool to give total support to Hague, whom he has always admired. He could best help by becoming, at the right moment, the Shadow Foreign Secretary — he would have authority, experience and negotiating skill. John Major may not have been a Tory asset at the last election, but he certainly is now.

Blair will be hard for Hague to match, though he is his equal as a Parliamentary debater. By the next election, if he can build the strongest team, Hague could have John Major, Michael Portillo and possibly Chris

Patten in the Shadow Cabinet. I'm not sure that Patten wants to come back, so that must be doubtful. John Redwood is proving a natural Opposition politician — the best in the Shadow Cabinet. Peter Lilley remains the most thoughtful of political intellectuals. Measuring Shadow ministers against Cabinet ministers, Hague potentially has quite an impressive team.

Like all party leaders, Hague has to deal with the internal opposition. Kenneth Clarke is formidable and popular, but too far to the left on tax and Europe for the Conservative Party. Alan Clark and Norman Tebbit are 'Dad's Army'; there is nothing to fear from them. This storm of disloyalty and counter-disloyalty which really originated with Michael Heseltine

and the assassination of Margaret Thatcher has largely blown itself out. Tony Blair's policy in opposition was never to give the Conservatives an issue around which they could rally. Peter Mandelson was brilliant in orchestrating these tactics. They do not work in government. All governments have to make choices which provide opportunities for opposition. There are already two such policies: the health service and the European single currency. If Labour does not find more money for the NHS, which can come only from taxation or private sources, the NHS may break down, at least in the worst areas. The Government has to make a choice about the single currency and whatever it decides will expose it to criticism. This week's *Financial Times* survey suggests that 67.5 per cent of the electorate opposes merging the pound into a single currency, and only 15 per cent is in favour. Blair will not want to give the Conservatives an issue on which they have so large a lead in England.

Apart from the issues which arise from the Government, there are others which the Conservatives can create for themselves. Gordon Brown will reform some taxes, as all good Chancellors do. Odily, Kenneth Clarke brusquely refused to reform capital gains tax, even though it could

have increased revenue and John Major wanted it. Brown will take advantage of his blunder. But there are larger tax reforms which Labour is unlikely to introduce. The year 2000 is an election year in the United States. The Republican candidate, Steve Forbes will again introduce his proposal to charge a flat rate of income tax into the primaries; as the American Inland Revenue Service is in deep administrative confusion, that may well become a big election issue. The Conservatives will be examining the flat tax for Britain: tax simplification has a political appeal.

The greatest risk to the Labour Party comes from the business cycle. This also has a parallel in 20th-century electoral history. On May 31, 1929, Labour won the general election; Ramsay MacDonald's speeches "might all have been made by Baldwin". On September 29, the Wall Street panic began; the subsequent world depression destroyed the Labour Government. One does not need to assume a world depression now; the British trade cycle is already a mature one. The boom is not likely to last through to the next election. Rising unemployment and rising bankruptcies are rather more probable; they would put pressure on the Government. Of course, governments can win elections during a recession; Major did that in 1992. But it is never easy to do so.

It is not to say that the Conservatives should be made favourites to win the next election, merely that there are circumstances in which they might. It was their good fortune after the comparable defeat of 1945 to have Churchill, with the authority of a war-winner, as leader. Hague, who is young and inexperienced, will have to make his own authority, which will be difficult to do. Yet it is far too early to write him off.

Hague would not have become leader of his party at the age of 36 if he were not an exceptional young politician. He has a good temperament for Opposition. He may sometimes aim his blows at the wrong target, but he will hit hard. He is an excellent speaker; he made a good speech on Tuesday, and will probably make another tomorrow. I can remember the Tories in 1946; even under Churchill they were in despair. I still expect Tony Blair to win the next election, but I do not see that the Tories have any reason to despair now.

Who are the true Brits?

Even Asians cheer
Rangers now, says
Magnus Linklater

Lord Tebbit's Blackpool speech on history and the British identity was a gift to William Hague. It allowed him at a stroke to disown the "dinosaurs" right wing of his party, and to place New Toryism firmly on the side of a modern, multi-cultural Britain. The argument itself, however, is left lingering in the air, bearing with it a faintly sulphurous odour. What Lord Tebbit was exposing is a theme that has smouldered beneath the surface of British life ever since Enoch Powell's Birmingham speech of 1968, where he described a nation "heaping up its own funeral pyre" by allowing foreign dependents into Britain.

Lord Tebbit, thirty years later, echoed it by giving a warning that unless ethnic minorities are taught to absorb British culture and history, the United Kingdom will go the same way as Yugoslavia. Both speeches were inflammatory: both defy a native tradition of tolerance.

The Tebbit point challenges, head on, a generation of education policy. "Multiculturalism is divisive," he said. "One cannot uphold two sets of ethics, or be loyal to two nations... Youngsters born here should be taught that British history is their history."

This is immensely dangerous territory, not least because in countries where national standards are rigidly enforced, trouble tends to breed rather than the reverse. Lord Tebbit would presumably favour the French approach, where a strong sense of national identity led head teachers to forbid Muslim girls from wearing the Islamic veil. The result, far from promoting conformity, was a political and educational crisis which one commentator, Gilles Kepel, compared to the Dreyfus affair, and which still convulses French society.

In his recently published book, *Allah in the West*, Kepel argues that the British system, based on a model of communal politics which grew up during the Raj, has so far headed off confrontation.

Even if one accepts the Tebbit view, one is left with the question: what does he mean by "British" history? If, as I suspect, he means English history, then what he is arguing for is a far narrower version of our island story than most historians would be prepared to accept today. He, like me, was probably brought up on the dates of the "English" kings and queens, the Magna Carta, Simon de Montfort, the Battle of Bosworth and the wives of Henry VIII — the building blocks of schoolboy history for as long as anyone educated in the public school system can remember.

As a Scot, prepared for British exams, I learnt nothing of my native history. I was ignorant of the richness of Celtic culture, the complexities of Irish nationalism, or the religious wars of the 17th century. It gave me a distinctly lopsided view of this United Kingdom, and told me little about the Union of the Crowns, or the great debates which surged around the Act of Union — all highly relevant today. I resented it, not just from a sense of injured pride, but because it was so cramped and inadequate. And it persists: recently I asked the headmaster of a leading Scottish public school whether he taught Scottish history. "Certainly not," he assured me. "We teach British history to A-Level standards." So much for balance.

My Scottish-educated friends have no such difficulty. Most of them, brought up in the state system, learnt Scottish history within a British context. That trend has, if anything, increased. It has given them a strong sense of their own identity, but I would defy Lord Tebbit to suggest that it is nudging them towards blood-soaked Balkanisation. On the contrary, two cultures have sat easily with each other, a perfect contradiction of his basic thesis. Two different forms of education, two legal systems, two distinct cultures, but still, 300 years on, one United Kingdom. The strong majority for devolution last month was not, let us remember, a vote for separation, but a vote to stay within the UK.

A firm but mutually courteous process of compromise was the way Paul Barker described the British attitude to religious differences in *The Times* recently. For Judaism that has meant an easy, almost effortless integration. For Muslims it has involved maintaining, even emphasising, cultural distinctions. Forcing them now to conform to the educational traditions of a nation which is itself in the process of rapid change, would be an instant recipe for disaster.

And anyway, how do you legislate for the hybrid state of our own society, itself a challenge to stereotypes? Not long ago, at a Rangers-Celtic match, a horde of blood-curdling but largely peaceful sectarianism, I found myself queuing behind a group of chanting fans clad from top to toe in Rangers blue. They were singing the verse of a familiar terrace song which includes some awful reference to former battles whose participants were "up to our knees in Fenian blood". The fans were all wearing turbans, and when I overtook them I saw they were displaying a badge proclaiming: "Asians for Rangers." They were having a great time.

No entry

THIS lot does not seem to get on any better than the last lot. An astonishing incident sheds a bright light on relations between Tony Blair and David Blunkett. It began when Blunkett received a memo from the Prime Minister. The contents, I understand, did not make happy reading for the Education Secretary.

Blunkett, in an agitated condition, telephoned No 10 and demanded to discuss the memo with Blair.

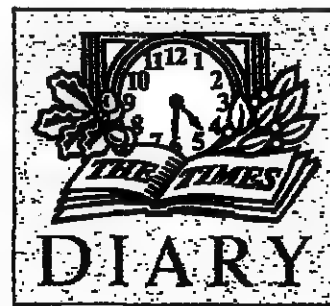
"Can't be done," harrumphed No 10. "The PM is meeting David Trimble and can't be disturbed."

Blunkett was not to be deflected, telling officials: "Get the car, we're going to Downing Street."

Surprised at Blunkett's insubordination, a prime ministerial aide rang Blunkett on his mobile phone and presented him with a stark choice: "There are camera crews waiting to film Trimble outside No 10. If you want to be filmed being turned away by the policeman, then so be it."

Unfortunately, the minister's car had already swept round Parliament Square and was bearing down on Downing Street. Uh, oh.

As telephones crackled around Whitehall, a solution was brokered. Blunkett would enter No 11 as if meeting the Chancellor, who was not in. He would loiter there on his own for 15 minutes then get back in his car and leave. And nobody would ever speak of how Yes Minister became reality. Until now of course. By the way, I am assured that relations are now "entirely amicable".



15 Ken Clarke taking this man of the people thing a bit far? Back in London yesterday, he took the Underground, travelling west on the Circle Line. Informally attired and clutching a battered briefcase, he sat staring glumly at the floor. Just as well really — his neighbour was engrossed in a newspaper article headed, "Ken still wants to be PM".

Banging on

SUPPER was rather spoiled for Conservatives on Tuesday evening when a "bomb" went off. Guesses including Michael Portillo, Gillian Shephard, George Young and Michael Howard, were chomping away at the Riverhouse Restaurant, Blackpool, when a large bang silenced proceedings.

And what was this dangerous device blown up by police? A set of hand-made glass wine coasters destroyed with zealous efficiency in geranium beds in the joint's garden. The bang had prompted a quivering voice from Michael Howard's party to exclaim: "It sounds like Ted Heath's bath salts."

A contrite Bill Scott, proprietor, explains: "We had done a favour for a local glass-making company which thought it would be nice to repay us with a gift. But wrapped in a brown-paper package, it looked very suspicious."

AS if sending chocolates had not landed Ann Widdecombe, former Home Office minister, in enough trouble, she recently dispatched a box to Michael Portillo and party workers at his old constituency, Enfield Southgate. As at Blackpool, this rather alarmed the bomb squad. "Luckily they were not blown up," munches a witness. "They were jolly good."

Cheers, Teddy

IT promises to be a distinctly gloomy club. And thankfully it is rather short of potential members: the Conservative Teetotal Club. It is the brainchild of Sir Teddy Tay-

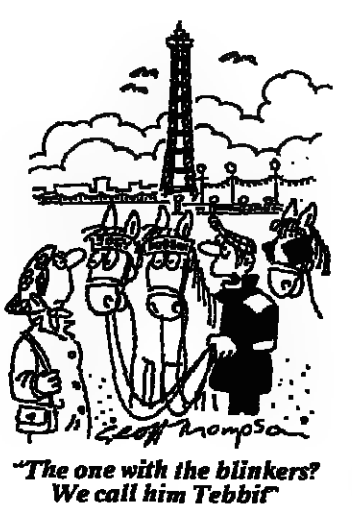


IN a bold claim, the couturier behind the risque number sported by Ffion Jenkins, above left, compared her figure to Marilyn Monroe's. But whereas Marilyn was measured as a voluptuous size 16, Mr Hague's fiancée, I am reliably informed, is a svelte 14.

lor, MP, who signed a solemn pledge to abstain when he was just six years old. And he has. "I want more party members to join under the banner of sobriety," he says earnestly. "A great many social problems stem from alcohol." So, what other MPs are teetotal? "Er, no one that I can think of."



IN a bold claim, the couturier behind the risque number sported by Ffion Jenkins, above left, compared her figure to Marilyn Monroe's. But whereas Marilyn was measured as a voluptuous size 16, Mr Hague's fiancée, I am reliably informed, is a svelte 14.



JASPER GERARD



ENTER THE BARBARIANS

Oxford and Cambridge must change to survive

It is, in the words of one Oxford graduate, a funny old world. The common rooms of Oxford and Cambridge are stuffed with centre-left sympathisers. The atmosphere in both cities immediately after Tony Blair's triumph was akin to post-liberation Paris. The mood in the quadrangles is now different. The air is closer to that of Prague in the late 1940s: the Germans may have gone but the character of the Red Army has become clearer. This Government has little affection for Oxbridge and appears determined to alter the present funding formula. Exeunt the Philistines. Enter the barbarians.

The apocalyptic attacks launched by the two Vice Chancellors reflect the belated realisation that Labour isn't joking. Gordon Brown used his party conference speech to condemn the statistic that half of Oxbridge students come from the independent sector. David Blunkett might keep the college fee but on the condition that the number of state school students increases. Tessa Blackstone, the Minister for Higher Education, is shamelessly fanatical on the subject. This triple alliance is a powerful combination. A mere three members of the current cabinet attended either university. An old-boy network rarely functions well without old boys.

The Government's decision to scrutinise the college fee is not without legitimacy. A central tenet of the Dearing report was that those who most directly benefit from higher education should share more of its costs. That is a proper principle. The Oxbridge exception does not fit easily with that dictum. The most rational route out of this dilemma would see the college fee abolished but additional "top-up" tuition fees introduced as an alternative. That would transfer this unusual expenditure from the taxpayer to the student. However, the Department for Education is determined to exclude that option. Mr Blunkett regards top-up fees as a device that would entrench not erode elitism. Without this arrangement the abolition or

erosion of the college fee would be little short of sadistic. Dr Peter North's warning that the Government might "destroy the competitive position" of the two universities should be heeded. Oxford and Cambridge should not accept quotas as the price of retaining state funding. They would be better off as entirely private institutions. That is a prospect that is worth contemplation.

The admissions procedures at each university is far from perfect. However, it is a fact — an unfortunate one perhaps but a fact all the same — that independent schools and, especially, grammar schools, produce the lion's share of those students who achieve at least three "A" grades at A level. To that extent they are arguably under-represented at Oxbridge. There have also been extensive efforts to attract candidates from the state sector. This drive has not always been supported by some of the schools concerned. Applications, not admissions, remain the core of this challenge.

Oxbridge must change to ensure its survival. The bureaucratic arrangements in both places are byzantine. A combination of autonomous colleges and faculties have created a collection of committees largely incapable of coherence or change. College accounts are shrouded in a secrecy that makes Cuba appear a model of open government by comparison. The North Commission acknowledged Oxford's difficulties but has not been fully implemented.

Neither Oxford nor Cambridge can afford to remain in the 19th century. That in turn will require a new relationship between the colleges and the centre. Oxbridge should retain the college fee or be allowed top-up tuition fees as a substitute. The ancient universities should be shielded from a Minister for Higher Education who does not choose to distinguish between excellence and elitism. Neither establishment, though, can ignore the theme of modernisation now so associated with another Oxford graduate.

RACE TO BE MODERN

Hague is right, but Tebbit cannot be ignored

Ever since Neil Kinnock rounded on Militant Tendency in 1985, Labour leaders have understood the popular grins they can win from fighting their own extremists. Tony Blair has made a career of it. William Hague is now following suit. The Tory leader's criticism of Lord Tebbit — who attacked the spread of multiculturalism — will do wonders for his image among the majority of voters. But he cannot quite ignore the shrinking constituency to whom Lord Tebbit's remarks were addressed.

Britain has changed hugely in the past decade, a change of which Lord Tebbit seems unaware. Racism is far less prevalent now. Visitors from America to Britain are amazed and impressed to see the ease with which young blacks, Asians and whites mingle, particularly in cities. Schools preach tolerance above all else, and young people, on the whole, agree that racism is one of the most pernicious social sins. Though racial harassment is not unknown, Britain is still a model for peaceful race relations compared with the US, France, Italy and Germany.

Lord Tebbit's views are indeed "outdated", as Mr Hague claimed yesterday. Multiculturalism is not damaging to the fabric of the nation; indeed it is Britain's very diversity that makes its modern urban culture so vibrant. Of course children should learn British history in school. But they should also learn French history, German history and, if they want, Indian or Jamaican history. These are not mutually exclusive. Lord Tebbit's "cricket test" involves people choosing between nationalities. This is not the case with history. Nor is it the case with identity. British Asians may feel both British and Asian, and that is

perfectly healthy. As Munshi Chopra, the 15-year-old who addressed the conference on the first day, pointed out, the values that he has inherited from his Asian parents are the very values of hard work and integrity that the Conservative Party professes to honour.

Lord Tebbit's chill warnings of Britain turning into a Yugoslavia are more than mischievous: they are dangerous. To attempt to stir up racial hatred is about the most irresponsible course of action that a politician can follow. So Mr Hague was right to slap him down and to emphasise that the Tory party was going to be inclusive.

The Conservative leader understands the importance of bringing his party up to date with the social and cultural changes that have taken place in Britain. In doing so, however, he must remain aware of the sensitivities of his older supporters. Their fear of blacks and Asians stems from an insecurity about what it means these days to be British. The way to assuage their anxiety is not to play on their insecurities, as Lord Tebbit has done, but to forge a modern British identity that restores their national pride. Mr Blair tried to do so last week; Mr Hague can add to it tomorrow.

The Conservative leader has already tried to signal his modernity: the much-derided baseball cap, trip to the Notting Hill carnival and message of support to the Gay Pride march have been an attempt to tell the voters that his party is no longer stuck in the 1950s. Jumping four decades in as many months, though, has been a painful lurch for many of his activists. The Tory party must bring itself up to date, but if its leader does not want Lord Tebbit's support to rise, he may have to make some of his moves a little more gentle.

THE THIRTEENTH LABOUR

Can Hercules take on Walt Disney and live?

Tomorrow *Hercules* will arrive at Leicester Square and simultaneously at cinemas around the United Kingdom. This is a feat of ubiquity which not even that hero has performed in his myth until now. On our Arts pages today Geoff Brown is amused by this Disneyfication of an old story. And *Hercules* is as usual creating uproar wherever he goes. In America, where it has been on screen since July, *Hercules* looks like being Disney's least successful animated feature since *The Little Mermaid* in 1989. It is still predicted to gross \$100 million at the domestic box office and \$300 million worldwide.

Nevertheless, this film is setting searching questions for entertainment analysts. Are teenagers growing too sophisticated for animated cartoons? Have rocketing budgets, rising expectations and mounting competition damaged the summer blockbuster trade? Is the marketing operation that now goes with such films killing the goose that lays the golden eggs? The *Hercules* campaign has licensed 100 manufacturers to market 6,000 products, from backpacks to underwear and action heroes to handbags (a variant on the hero's club). In the film *Hercules* makes self-referential jokes about merchandising wars by strapping on Air Herc sandals, drinking a Hercules and signing a Grecian Express credit card. When a film is made for such calculating commercialism, it may lose the plot. Meanwhile textual rather than commercial critics complain that *Hercules* has got

the story all wrong. In the film, Hercules first kills the Minotaur and then Medusa. But, as some schoolchildren still know, it was Theseus who killed the Minotaur, and Perseus (great-great-uncle of Hercules) who killed Medusa. Disney gives Hercules a warm, loving relationship with his mother Hera. Whereas myth tells of his jealous stepmother Hera sending two snakes to kill the infant Hercules in his cradle. He strangled them. The Greeks are so angry that for Greece the film has been renamed *Beyond the Myth of Hercules*.

But such textual pedantry is to misinterpret both Hercules and Disney. Hercules caught the popular fancy. He has always attracted the myths of less popular heroes. And the Walt Disney dream factory up Do-py Drive has always softened, sanitised and sentimentalised classics. Would Disney cut the episode of Hercules killing his wife and children in a fit of madness? That is as simple a question to answer as whether Hercules would guzzle a sausage or swill a goblet of wine or just after a pretty girl.

The old stories are the best. Some of the children may go on to read *The Jungle Book*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and other deeper dramas behind the two-dimensional cartoons. But Hercules has survived 30 centuries of distortion and mythmaking. He was even adopted as an exemplar of fortitude by the Stoics, to the neglect of his other qualities. So he can surely survive the ordeal of being turned into a Hollywood star.

Future funding of NHS 'monopoly'

From the Director of the Health and Welfare Unit, Institute of Economic Affairs

Sir, The BMA's report on NHS funding (details, later editions, October 8) raised the possibility of charging patients for visiting their GP. To introduce charges while the NHS remains a public-sector monopoly would be to add insult to injury. Public policy should aim to combine universal access with empowerment of consumers through competition.

Charges are favoured by a minority (so far) of doctors, primarily as a discipline on demanding patients. The discussion of charges also rests on the assumption that the main problem of the NHS is a shortage of finance, whereas it is also provides bad service because it is a monopoly.

The empowerment of consumers, as suggested in the Institute of Economic Affairs report, *How to Pay for Healthcare*, published on June 23, will require the introduction of private insurance and competition between hospitals. Best practice in America suggests that the ideal model is "managed competition", under which patients form groups for the purpose of purchasing insurance.

In America the lead is taken by employers. In Britain group purchasing could be the responsibility of health authorities. Everyone, rich and poor alike, would have the standard package financed from general taxes and individuals would have the option of paying more for additional services.

Such a scheme would allow the Government to confine itself to what is good at, maintaining universal access.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID GREEN, Director,
Health and Welfare Unit, IEA,
2 Lord North Street, SW1,
October 8.

From Dr Kenneth G. Williams

Sir, Separation of the hotel and medical care components in healthcare is not merely desirable, it is essential. An enforced stay in hospital means being fed for nothing, although in some circumstances money is taken away by charges in benefit.

A charge would not erode the basic principle of free medical care for all. The level could be set by ability to pay. And patients could enjoy small luxuries for a charge, varying their visitors' gifts of flowers or grapes.

Yours sincerely,
K. G. WILLIAMS,
Flat 24, Nuffield Lodge,
22 Shepherd's Hill, Highgate, N6,
October 8.

Equal partners?

From Mr David Lindsay

Sir, In view of the European Court of Justice's decision last year to reject equal treatment of men and women on the issue of bus passes for older people (report, July 12, 1996), against their own Advocate-General's advice, it might be premature for groups supporting Lisa Grant (report, "Lesbian couple win equal rights to company perks", October 1) to assume their case was already won.

The bus-pass case fell at the last hurdle, on the court holding that these passes could not be considered as within "social security" in relation to the principle of equal treatment in social security; so the claim that discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation is comprehended within "sex discrimination" in relation to the principle of equal pay (and equal job benefits) for "men and women" might fall to the same way.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID LINDSAY
(Legal Adviser, Parity —
Equal Rights for Men and Women),
36 Orchard Coombe,
Whitchurch Hill, Reading, Berkshire,
October 2.

From Mr Christopher Miles Coope

Sir, Who is my "partner"? Must we continue to assume that a partner must be a person to whom one has sexual relations of one sort or another?

Non-sexual friendships can be deeper and longer lasting than many sexual ones. Would it not be inequitable if such friendships were denied legal recognition just because no one has a moral objection to them.

And why indeed should we be confined to one partner at a time?

Yours etc,
CHRISTOPHER MILES COOPE,
University of Leeds,
School of Philosophy,
Leeds LS2 9JT,
October 2.

Outsiders and others

From Mr Michael Wyldbore-Smith

Sir, Could someone please enlighten me. By what name are the residents of Devon and Cornwall known, when they themselves go on holiday elsewhere (letters, September 22 and 26, October 4)?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL WYLDBORE-SMITH,
Most Cottage,
Berkswell,
Coventry, West Midlands.
michael.wyldbore-smith@btz.co.uk
October 7.

Appeals on self-assessment deadline

From the Chairman of the National Association of General Commissioners of Income Tax

Sir, There has been much publicity (report, Weekend Money, October 4) about penalties applicable under the new self-assessment system of taxation.

The September 30 deadline was the last date on which 1997 income tax returns could be filed with the Inland Revenue where the Inland Revenue would guarantee to calculate any tax due before January 31, 1998, the next payment date. This latter date is also the deadline by which 1997 returns must be filed with the Inland Revenue to avoid a mandatory late-filing penalty of £100.

If a taxpayer feels he has a reasonable excuse for late filing which the inspector of taxes will not concede, he may appeal to the General Commissioners of Income Tax.

The commissioners are people from the local community appointed by the Lord Chancellor, not chosen because of any great expertise in tax matters, but for the qualities necessary to properly decide issues between the taxpayer and the Inland Revenue. They are essentially lay people with a determination to provide a just and sensible attitude in their decisions on matters brought before them. They are unpaid and completely independent of the Inland Revenue. What a local inspector of taxes may regard as not being a reasonable excuse may be determined by the commissioners as being reasonable.

Proceedings at commissioners' meetings, which are held in private, are informal and the taxpayer does not have to be professionally represented. The easiest way for a taxpayer to appeal is to tell the inspector of taxes that he wishes to do so. The in-

spector will then inform the clerk to the general commissioners, who will arrange a hearing.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER D. FELLOWS
(Chartered accountant),
Chairman,
National Association of General Commissioners of Income Tax,
The Chubb Buildings,
Fryer Street,
Wolverhampton, West Midlands,
October 4.

From Ms Christie Maher, Director of the Plain English Campaign

Sir, Your report (September 30) about US tax officials being suspended after harassing American taxpayers is very disconcerting in the light of recent changes in the way taxes are collected in Britain.

Elizabeth Filkin, adjudicator for the Inland Revenue, says in her annual report (details, September 18) that 2,500 people complained about the Inland Revenue last year. She expects the figure to rise as people struggle with the self-assessment system. How long will it be before they start to target the most vulnerable of those affected by the system, the way their American counterparts seem to be doing?

When will the Chancellor intervene in this terrible decline in relations between the Inland Revenue and taxpayers? Let him call a halt to the fiasco unfolding now, grant an amnesty and force the Inland Revenue to redesign the form so it can be understood by the taxpayer.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTIE MAHER,
Director,
Plain English Campaign,
PO Box 3, New Mills, Derbyshire,
September 30.

Tebbit's speech

From Canon Ivor Smith-Cameron

Sir, As an Asian priest, may I respond to Lord Tebbit's attack in his speech yesterday at Blackpool on Britain's "multiculturalism" (report, October 8), by reminding him that Jesus was a Jew and the early Church in Jerusalem was firmly rooted in Jewish culture.

The New Testament records a major struggle between the Jerusalem Church and those from Gentile cultures who embraced the Christian faith.

Eventually it was resolved that the Gentile Christians were not required to adopt a Jewish culture. Thus the Church became fundamentally multi-

cultural, and universal in its openness to newcomers.

In our own time the Churches in England are breaking out of an exclusively English culture under the influence of those of their members whose cultural roots are in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and elsewhere. The parallel with Blackpool is close.

All strength to those political leaders who celebrate the fact of our multicultural society, and thereby help us all to work together for the mutual benefits that our diverse cultures can bring in heralding the future.

Yours sincerely,
IVOR SMITH-CAMERON
(Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen),
100 Prince of Wales Drive, SW11,
October 8.

Church security

From the Bishop of Hulme, Chairman of the Council for the Care of Churches

Sir, Your correspondence on church security, following your leading article, "Nothing sacred" (September 30), may have given the mistaken impression that nothing is being done by church bodies to help parishes address the problem.

Quite apart from Lord Lloyd-Webber's splendid initiative of the Open Churches Trust (letter, October 4), this council, together with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, has organised a series of seminars and publications to advise church councils where the potential dangers lie and what the appropriate remedies might be.

Mr William Ruxton (letter, same day) regrets that a central security consultant and central record of thefts has not been established by "the Church of England authorities". The

Council for the Care of Churches believes this would be an over-costly and comparatively ineffective response.

Each parish church is a local responsibility and is best managed locally. The alarm system appropriate for a city-centre building would be wasted in the middle of fields. The job of those of us at the centre is to channel to parishes full and up-to-date expertise and, yes, to encourage grant-givers to provide appropriate help, whether that is to pay church-watchers or to buy particular equipment.

Contrary to current myth, security has been a problem for churches from medieval times; then and now it can best be tackled on the spot, encouraged but not directed by outside help.

Yours faithfully,
COLIN HULME,
Chairman,
Council for the Care of Churches,
Fielden House,
Little College Street, SW1,
October 6.

Cruelty to badger

From the Executive Director of the Countryside Alliance

Sir, Your report, "Dog club official jailed for cruelty to pregnant badger" (October 7), did a disservice to the Fell and Moorland Working Terrier Club, which is affiliated to the Countryside Alliance.

The convicted man has not been a member of the club for three years and is not an official.

The club provides an invaluable service to owners of terriers that become lost underground in the countryside. Our office deals with at least one call a week from distraught

owners seeking help.

All members have to adhere to the strict code of conduct set by the National Working Terrier Federation and approved by the Countryside Alliance when carrying out legitimate pest control at the request of landowners and farmers.

We totally condemn the persecution of protected species such as the badger.

Yours truly,
PETER VOUTE,
Executive Director,
Countryside Alliance,
The Old Town Hall,
367 Kensington Road, SE11,
October 7.

General Berge

From Lord Jellicoe

Sir, I was very glad to read today the obituary of that splendid soldier, fine man and very dear friend, General Georges Berge.

In your fascinating account of the first two Free French missions into occupied France there was one error. Georges Berge did not in fact take part in the second mission, "Josephine B", in which an important power generator near Bordeaux was blown up. However, the success of that mission owed much to the Resistance cell which he had established in South West France following his own mission ("Savanna") two months earlier. Then, in the ten days before being taken off in the submarine *Tigris*, he set up Resistance cells in Paris, Nancy, Bayonne and his home town, Mimizan.

The wartime SAS also owed an inestimable debt to Berge. The highly

trained French squadron which he brought in January 1942 to join David Stirling's original detachment comprised, as Stirling put it "the bravest of the brave". They showed both courage and skill in their raiding operations in the North African desert before their return to the UK when the two French SAS regiments were formed.

David Stirling, who held Berge in the highest esteem, always spoke of him as one of the co-founders of the SAS Regiment. This generous judgment is one which I wholeheartedly endorse.

Yours faithfully,
JELLOCOE,
Tidcombe Manor,
Marlborough, Wiltshire,
October 2.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Play up, play up — but win the game

From Mr Alex Standish

Sir, As a primary school PE teacher, I disagree with the suggestion by the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference that the behaviour of players — and parents — at school sports matches needs regulating, and that matches should elevate fair play above winning (report, October 7).

I attended a school football match recently where a goalkeeper dived to stop a shot on the goal line. The attacking team protested that the ball had crossed the line and much to my surprise the goalkeeper agreed and the referee was persuaded to give the goal.

Putting fair play before winning is precisely what many educationalists want to see as a regular feature of competitive games. But the goalkeeper's opinion could have cost his team the game. Fortunately in this instance it didn't and his side went on to win the game. As for the decision, that is up to the officials, not the players.

At another game, in which my school team was taking part, both teams were told by the referee not to use aggressive tactics. Does anybody know how to tackle in a non-aggressive way?

The Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race is the culmination of a year's work. The idea that this, or any other competitive sports match, be turned into a friendly event where you help the opposition out is nonsense. Without competitive rivalry teams do not strive for excellence, and ultimately standards are lowered.

Those educationalists who argue that the competitive element of physical education lessons be downplayed have taken a path towards lower standards.

Yours etc,
ALEX STANDISH,
51 Lansdown Place,
Hove, East Sussex,
October 8.

Kings of the river

From Mr J. T. Wakefield

Sir, The photograph of a fish leaping from a wave (October 1) is most remarkable and I commend the photographer on his determination to obtain such a picture.

I am reminded of a similar sight I witnessed in an isolated spot in Alaska a few years ago where salmon (ranging from Kings of 40lb and more, Sockeye, Humpies and Silvers of up to 25lb) come to spawn in a very small river which has no full-time outflow into the sea. The river flows only when there is a high tide (usually late evening or during the night) and it is then the salmon run in large numbers.

The salmon congregate in the bay, waiting for the tide (where they are prey to seals and killer whales), and can be seen, ten to twenty fish at a time, riding broadside on in the curling waves.

With the afternoon light shining through the waves the sight is one to be seen to be believed, and to cast a fly into the wave and see a salmon turn and take is just fantastic.

Yours sincerely,
J. T. WAKEFIELD,
2 Garden Court,
Riverside Road, West Moors, Dorset,
October 1.

Authors' brainstorm

From Mr P. H. R. Browning

Sir, In the mid-1990s the Home Office published *The Sentence of the Court*, a guide to the powers of magistrates.

The first edition appeared with a list of errata, which itself included more errata (letters, October 3, September 10 and 17). Among the most enjoyable were for "officer" read "offender" for "necessary" read "unnecessary".

The best, which suggested a radical new sentencing option read: for "fine" read "fire".

Yours faithfully,
PETER BROWNING,
Oak House, Garmston Lane,
Eaton Constantine,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire,
philip.browning@cablenet.co.uk
October 5.

World wide web

From Dr Stanley Solomons

Sir, Mr Hamish Carmichael (letter, October 7) draws attention to the unusual number of exceptionally large spiders webs this autumn and asks what it could mean.

Hopefully, it means very bad news for the flies.

Yours sincerely,
S. SOLOMONS,
165 West Heath Road, NW3,
October 7.

From Mr Christopher Ellis

Sir, Mr Carmichael's spiders are simply following the example of the Government — spinning like crazy.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER ELLIS,
18 Upper Old Park Lane,
Farnham, Surrey,
October 8.

THE TIMES

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY OCTOBER 9 1997

Brent Walker meets banks on £700m Wm Hill sale

By DOMINIC WALSH

BRENT WALKER, the debt-laden leisure group, will today table proposals for the disposal of the William Hill betting shop chain at a meeting with its banks. A £700 million sale to Nomura, the Japanese bank, is thought to be the favoured option.

Industry sources suggest the company, in conjunction with Close Brothers, its financial adviser, will ask the banks to rubber stamp a sale to Nomura. If the banks accept the proposal, the preferred bidder is expected to be announced on Friday.

None of the parties involved would comment ahead of this afternoon's meeting.

but one source said: "Nomura are convinced they've got it. As long as the banks agree, it's more or less a done deal. Their pockets are certainly deep enough."

A deal with Nomura, which recently unveiled the £1.2 billion acquisition of Intreprenuer and Spring Inns, is likely to cause furrowed brows among William Hill management. John Brown, managing director, and his team are known to favour a lower offer from CVC Capital Partners, the venture capital group, and may find themselves surplus to requirements if Nomura comes in.

In the past, the support of the incumbent management was usually sufficient to

secure this sort of deal, but the difference in the price — reported to be £80 million — and Brent Walker's huge debt mountain will make Nomura's offer difficult to resist.

For the board of Brent Walker, led by Sir

Commentary 27

Brian Goswell, the sale of William Hill will effectively bring down the curtain on the legacy of George Walker, the former boxer who borrowed heavily to build the company into a sprawling empire covering casinos, marinas, hotels, pubs and betting shops.

Since its collapse in 1991, Sir Brian has worked to sell off those assets for the best possible price, and the predicted £700 million from William Hill — added to the £171 million from the sale a year ago of the Putnamster — would leave the final cost to the banks at about £500 million. One analyst said last night: "That is an incredible result when you consider William Hill was probably worth no more than £450 million a year ago. Given that most of the debts, they will be delighted to get so much back." The main beneficiaries are thought to be Lloyds and Standard Chartered.

The price secured for William Hill reflects

not only Nomura's buying power but also the relative turnaround of the betting business over the past couple of years. The launch of the National Lottery spelt disaster for an industry still reeling from the recession and the road back has been a difficult one. A key factor has been the relaxation of the regulatory regime under which the betting industry is controlled. New rules allowing two fruit machines per shop and numbers games such as 49's have proved hugely successful.

Close Brothers is thought to have received 12 initial bids, which it whittled down to a shortlist of about half a dozen, including Bass, owner of the Coral chain.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET

INDEX	Value	Change
FTSE 100	5262.1	(-43.6)
FTSE All Share	2489.13	(-14.32)
Nikkei	17819.18	(+107.99)
Dow Jones	8067.07	(-111.24)
S&P Composite	959.78	(-13.33)

US RATE

Rate	Value	Change
Federal Funds	5.75%	(5.75%)
Long Bond	100.70%	(101.1%)
Yield	6.36%	(6.24%)

LONDON MONEY

Rate	Value	Change
3-month Interbank	7.45%	(7.45%)
Life long gilt	118.70%	(120.7%)

STERLING

Rate	Value	Change
New York	1.6205	(1.6227)
London	1.6225	(1.6238)
DM	2.4825	(2.474)
FF	6.5584	(6.572)
Sfr	2.3475	(2.3445)
Yen	160.64	(161.78)
£ Index	100.4	(100.5)

DOLLAR

Rate	Value	Change
London	1.7518	(1.7675)
DM	5.8865	(5.9055)
Sfr	1.4452	(1.4480)
Yen	120.64	(121.78)
£ Index	100.4	(100.5)

Tokyo close Yen 122.28

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Dec)	830.96 (\$20.70)
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GOLD

London close	830.85 (\$31.65)
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* denotes midday trading price

Greenspan's warning stuns Wall St

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

ALAN GREENSPAN, the Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, stunned Wall Street yesterday with a terse warning that the American recovery had been on an unsustainable track and that further large gains in share prices were unlikely.

The Dow Jones industrial average plummeted after Mr Greenspan's remarks to the House Budget Committee. In early afternoon trading, the Dow was quoted almost 115 points lower and the benchmark Treasury long bond was quoted nearly two points down at one stage.

European markets were caught in the severe downdraft from Wall Street leading to fears that Mr Greenspan was preparing financial mar-

kets for a rise in American interest rates. In London the FTSE 100 index closed 43.5 points lower, at 5,262.1, more than 100 points off its highs of the day.

Mr Greenspan said: "A re-emergence of inflation is, without question, the greatest threat to sustaining what has been a balanced economic expansion virtually without parallel in recent decades."

He highlighted the performance of the US labour market and, although he said there was little sign of upward pressure on wages at the moment, this could change. "If the recent two million plus annual pace of job creation were to continue, the pressures on wages... could escalate more rapidly," he said.

Echoing his comment last December about "irrational exuberance" in the stock market, which temporarily cooled off the pace of Wall Street's rise, he also said: "It clearly would be unrealistic to look for a continuation of stock market gains of anything like the magnitude of those recorded in the past couple of years."

Continual upward revisions of long-term corporate earnings expectations had driven price-earnings ratios to levels not often observed at this stage of an economic expansion, Mr Greenspan added.

The Fed has not changed its monetary policy since March 25 when it raised the Federal Funds rate by 0.5 per cent, to 5.5 per cent.

Yesterday, Wall Street analysts emphasised the significance of Mr Greenspan's remarks. Elliott Platt, a strategist at DLI, said: "He alerted the markets to the possibility that the Fed could start tightening rates again. Inflation has not gone away. That is very significant, although it could dissipate in a few weeks if new statistics don't back it up."

Robert DiClemente, chief US economist at Salomon Brothers, said: "Greenspan is now recognising that the economy is not growing at a sustainable pace. We can grow rapidly as long as we are absorbing slack, or move at a faster rate of productivity growth. But now we are on a slow collision course with capacity. There is zero fear of inflation in the bond markets."

He went on: "He reminded the markets we are growing at our limits. It's the Fed's role to avoid a rollercoaster ride. To do that Greenspan has put tightening back on to the agenda."

Before the Greenspan comments, the FTSE in London stood nearly 40 points higher in early afternoon trading, purely in a reaction to Wall Street's overnight gain of 78 points.

There was little trading interest in the start of the two-day meeting of the Bank of England's monetary policy committee, which is generally expected to leave base rates unchanged. An announcement will be made today.

AT&T linked to talk of \$48bn merger in US

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

AT&T, the largest US telecommunications group, is believed to be in merger talks with GTE, a leading local phone company. The deal, worth \$48 billion, would dwarf the \$30 billion WorldCom bid for MCI that is threatening British Telecom's own \$24 billion MCI alliance.

Shares in AT&T and GTE have risen more than 5 per cent this week amid reports that AT&T was looking at GTE to boost its local and Internet capacity. AT&T is also keen to stop the desertion of its customers to GTE's new long-distance service. A merger would return to the fold the one million customers lost over the past year.

The negotiations are inextricably linked to the succession problem at AT&T, analysts said. Bob Allen, the AT&T chief executive, is keen to leave and Chuck Lee, the GTE chief executive, is a candidate for his

job. Talks between AT&T and GTE have been in progress for several months but WorldCom's surprise bid has put pressure on the companies to do a deal.

AT&T fears for its dominant position in the US market because WorldCom-MCI would combine America's main Internet and corporate phone group with the second-biggest residential phone group.

WorldCom is keen to extend its global reach by also bringing BT into the deal as a partner. Bernard Ebbers, WorldCom's chief executive, spoke to Sir Iain Vallance, the BT chairman, on Friday and yesterday suggested "formal" talks could get under way. Mr Ebbers has offered BT a 10 per cent stake in the enlarged company in return for its 20 per cent MCI stake.

The WorldCom-MCI deal and a takeover of GTE by AT&T would need regulatory approval.



Sitting comfortably: Robert Templeman, left, managing director, and Gordon Caldwell, finance director, of H&C

H&C in agreed £52m bid to take over Kingsbury

By FRASER NELSON

H&C FURNISHINGS, the newly formed furniture group set up by Lord Harris of Peckham, has made an agreed £52 million takeover bid for rival Kingsbury. The move may herald a wave of consolidation in the sector.

H&C, formed when Lord Harris reversed his Harveys group into Cantors last summer, plans to spend £7 million converting Kingsbury's 80 stores into its own curtains-to-chairs Harveys format.

It then intends to challenge DFS, the furniture group led by Sir Graham Kirkham, for the position of number two in the market by opening 100 more Harveys stores within four years, taking its nationwide portfolio to 450.

Rob Templeman, managing director, said: "The merger puts us at the forefront of the consolidation in the industry which we are going to see very shortly. The sector will



Harris: smaller holding

end up with two or three strong brands with a very large market share, and we will be one of these leaders." After the merger, H&C will command 3.6 per cent of the furniture market, against DFS's 3.8 per cent share. The next largest player is MFL, market leader, which has an 11.7 per cent share. No other company has over 3 per cent.

Lord Harris, whose name dominated the furniture industry in the 1980s, will see his shareholding slip from 10 to 7 per cent after the deal. He has held the £10 million stake since Harveys split from his Harris Queensway in 1986, but remains a non-executive director, concentrating instead on running Carpetright, where he is chairman and chief executive.

H&C is draining its £13 million cash pile to finance the acquisition. It is offering 37 of its shares for every 51 of Kingsbury's — worth 202p a share at last night's close. There is a 175p a share cash alternative.

H&C shares jumped 24p to 279p yesterday, as Kingsbury shares gained 26p to a nine-month high of 200p. Kingsbury will close if the merger goes ahead, with the loss of 100 jobs.

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Tricon aims for larger slice

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

TRICON, the largest restaurants operator in the UK, wants to expand its Pizza Hut and KFC brands aggressively after its split from Pepsi and separate New York Stock Exchange listing.

Peter Bassi, the president, said: "The UK already has our strongest business in Europe but we still have a long way to go. We are very bullish on the UK, with a lot of growth left." Tricon's 800 UK Pizza Hut and KFC restaurants places it ahead of McDonald's which has 650 restaurants. Tricon is in a 15-year-old partnership in the UK with



Whitbread, the brewer. Mr Bassi said: "That's our best joint venture worldwide. It has served as a model for operations in other countries."

Tricon is also considering the reintroduction in the UK of the Taco Bell brand, which was phased out in the early 1990s due to a lack of substantial investment. Mr Bassi said: "It had nothing to do with Brits

not liking the taste. Tacos require more work to sell than pizza. Pizza is a more universal concept. We will try again with Taco Bell, but it will take some time."

Globally, Tricon has annual sales of \$20 billion from its 30,000 restaurants in 95 countries. Its 500,000 employees feed pizza, chicken and Mexican food to 25 million customers every day. The company was spun off from Pepsi for \$4.5 billion (£2.7 billion). Andrall Pearson, the chairman, said: "Tricon will be a dynamic competitor in the marketplace with three of the strongest restaurant concepts in the world."

Commentary, page 27

Capel-Cure criticised

By CAROLINE MERRELL

CAPEL-CURE MYERS, the stockbroker, faces a public rebuke from the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) over management of part of the Mirror Group pension fund.

A memorandum from the SFA board discloses that CCM, which manages £4.5 billion of client money, breached Securities and Investments Board rules in handling the Mirror Group pension fund. Records "were practically useless for the purpose of sensibly ascertaining who had custody of the stock", the SFA says.

CCM was one of several companies, including Invesco and Lehman Brothers, ordered to pay a total

of £32 million to Mirror Group pensioners in 1994. The payment followed the death of Robert Maxwell in 1991, and a subsequent legal wrangle about assets of the pension fund. The SFA's memorandum also alludes to a £150,000 fine imposed on CCM by it last year.

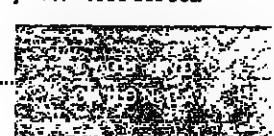
The document also censures Tony Patison, investment director, claiming that he had overall responsibility for investments.

CCM, which is owned by the Canadian Insurance Group, said that the fine had been paid and accounted for. The SFA is expected to make its findings public within two weeks.

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Water companies taken to task over dividends

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

THE water regulator launched a fresh attack on dividend payments yesterday after publishing figures that showed companies have paid out more than £6 billion to shareholders over the past four years.

Ian Byatt, Director-General at Ofwat, who has regularly attacked water companies' payouts to shareholders, said he had concerns about whether dividends are sustainable. Demanding more transparency, he said: "Customers and the regulator want to see where dividends are coming from so that we can be satisfied they are justified."

Mr Byatt, who is to set new price controls to start in 2000, said the windfall tax should rebound on dividend payments rather than customers. He said: "This tax should not be borne by customers. In some cases, therefore, this may result in lower utility

dividends than otherwise might be paid."

In real terms dividend payments by water companies have increased 55 per cent since 1992-93. Mr Byatt said: "Dividends from the regulated business should reflect only the cost of capital and the distribution to shareholders of a proper portion of the benefits of greater efficiency."

Capital investment by the water and sewerage companies increased by 22 per cent last year to £3 billion, while operating costs fell by 2 per cent, according to Ofwat figures. But Mr Byatt said that spending on improvements to sewerage had not increased as expected in the past two years. He and the Environment Agency are to investigate companies where there is believed to be a shortfall. The gap between expected spending on sewerage improvements and actual investment was more

than £900 million in the past two years, Ofwat said.

Mr Byatt said: "The agency and I intend to discuss these compliance programmes with a number of companies to ensure they have realistic plans to complete the schemes by the appropriate dates."

The Environment Agency is concerned that deadlines for key directives over sewerage standards could be at risk. The water regulator held out the prospect of price cuts for customers in the next pricing review. He has already said he may consider a one-off price cut to bring down charges after improved efficiencies at water companies. He said: "Many companies are continuing to show that they can become more efficient than I expected, and they are improving services while reducing expenditure in real terms. I will pass onto customers these cost reductions."



Julian Budd, managing director of Alexandra: "A new, more positive sales culture"

Alexandra back in the black

ALEXANDRA WORKWEAR, the supplier of uniforms and protective clothing, is maintaining the interim dividend at 2.5p after earning pre-tax profits of £2.2 million in the 28 weeks to August 16, compared with a loss of £609,000 previously. Earnings were 42p a share (14p loss). The shares rose 5.5p to 115p.

The company, which has undergone extensive restructuring, took a £200,000 charge against the introduction of a new sourcing operation. There was also a £504,000 loss arising from the termination of an office lease in Edinburgh.

Julian Budd, who became managing director in May, said: "A new, more positive sales culture has been adopted and we are taking full advantage of our improved competitiveness and lower cost base."

Best practice ruling to tighten up reports

THE format and nature of the preliminary announcements of company's annual results are to be tightened up if proposed rules, published in an exposure draft today, gain approval. The Accounting Standards Board (ASB) has followed up its statements on interim reports with the publication of proposals for what it called a "best practice" statement. It suggests preliminary announcements should be published within 60 days of the financial year end. This is likely to meet resistance from finance directors but, as the ASB pointed out, "this timescale is already achieved by many listed companies and should be a realistic, if challenging, target."

The proposals would also turn the spotlight on the second half year of a company's performance. Currently preliminary results focus on the results for the full year with the first half having been focused upon in the interim statement. But, as the ASB pointed out, "the market tends to react more particularly to new, previously unreported information about the second half year". As a result the ASB recommends that the final interim period data should be separately presented.

Accountancy, page 30

Business units planned

THE Government hopes to create more than 2,500 jobs through developing and building business units throughout England. The three-year programme of building new factories and offices and improving existing units will involve a new company set up by English Partnerships, the Government's regeneration agency, and the Royal Bank of Scotland. Under the first phase over one million square feet of industrial and office space will be built in areas of economic need. Schemes are planned in the North and South West regions.

Acquisition at Lloyd's

INVESTMENT in Lloyd's of London by US and Bermudan insurance companies has continued with Capital Re, the US specialist insurer, agreeing to buy CI de Rougemont, a small managing agency, for a price to be agreed. Last year, Capital Re bought RGB, another managing agency. De Rougemont runs two syndicates. Its non-marine syndicate 732 will merge with RGB's syndicate 490 for 1998 if approval is given. The deal supersedes arrangements for Limit, the investment trust, and Riverside Underwriters to take stakes in de Rougemont.

GMB calls for pay body

A NEW inspectorate should be set up to enforce the minimum wage, which should be £4 an hour at least, the GMB union urged yesterday. In its submission to the Low Pay Commission the GMB also called for the new statutory rate to be related to training, not age. A lower rate for younger workers could lead to exploitation by unscrupulous employers, said the union. Wages inspectors should have the power to examine payroll records to check that the minimum wage is being paid, the union urged.

IFA advocate resigns

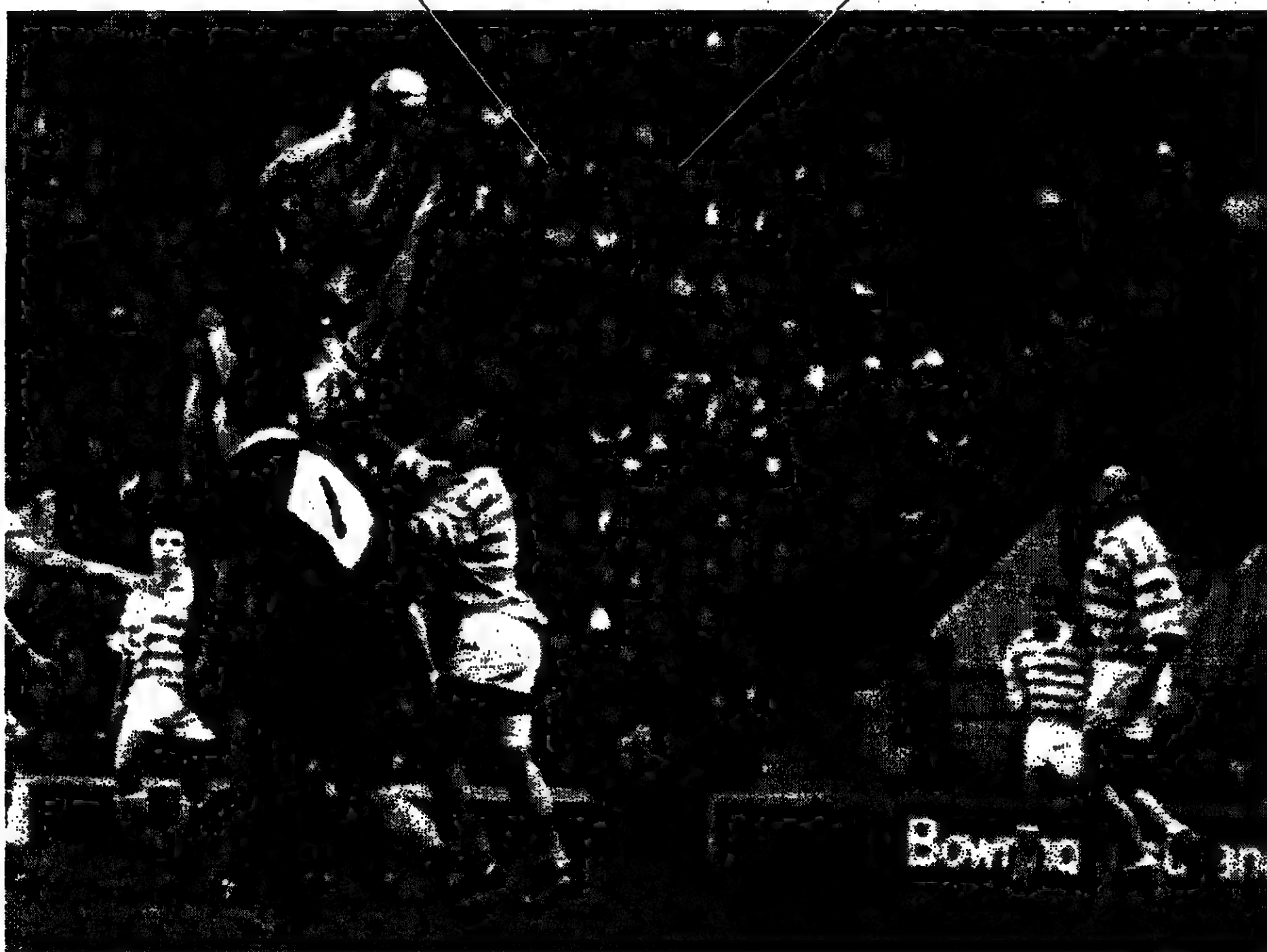
ROBERT BROWNE CLAYTON, chief executive of IFA Promotion (IFAP), which has a £2.5 million annual budget from more than 40 life offices to promote independent financial advice, has resigned after only two years in the post. His departure comes after the appointment of Douglas Claisse, a former Clerical Medical deputy chief executive, as chairman of IFAP and a decision to focus it entirely on advertising and promotion rather than parliamentary lobbying. Mr Browne-Clayton said his role had thus become "less broadly based".

	Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank
	Bills	Bills	Bills	Bills
Australia \$	2.34	2.10	Malta	0.698
Austria Sch	21.08	19.38	Netherlands Gld	3.400
Belgium Fr	31.37	27.01	New Zealand \$	2.58
Canada \$	2.352	2.164	Norway Kr	12.10
Cyprus Cyp£	0.887	0.815	Portugal Esc	202.58
Denmark Kr	11.43	10.54	S Africa Rd	8.28
Finland Mk	8.08	8.25	Spain Ptas	161.70
France Fr	10.04	9.28	Sweden Kr	13.08
Germany DM	3.01	2.77	Switzerland FF	2.20
Greece Dr	478	459	Turkey Lira	2844.95
Hong Kong \$	15.38	14.18	USA \$	1.729
Iceland	128	128		
Ireland Pt	1.17	1.28		
Israel Shk	8.58	8.58		
Italy Lira	2060	2728		
Japan Yen	211.23	189.70		

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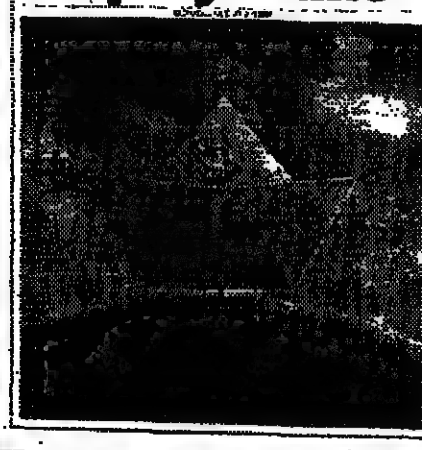
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CHANGING TIMES

Another lane on the superhighway



COMMENTARY by our City Editor

Just when you thought it was safe to go outdoors and that the future outline of the communications revolution was starting to clarify — up pops another potentially revolutionary technology. This, we were told yesterday, already exists to ship vast quantities of data, and maybe one day voice telephony, via the Internet into the home, down perfectly ordinary electricity wires. Has convergence no limits?

It is undoubtedly a remarkable thing for Norweb and Norweb Communications technologies to have done. For years telecom engineers have looked longingly at electricity wires but until now the noise and the interference on the line has beaten them. But what sort of a business will this latest piece of technical magic turn out to be? It looks like good news for electric utilities, which have a wire into every house in the UK, and would appear to have the glimmer of a new revenue stream without great extra cost. It would also seem to be another kick in the teeth for BT and anyone else, such as cable companies which have been hoping to make fast Internet access the unique selling point (USP) they have been so desperately searching for in vain for many years.

A little caution is required. As James Dodd, telecoms analyst at Dresdner Kleinwort, Benson, pointed out, telecoms revenues in the UK total £15 billion a year and the Internet only several hundred million at best. The noise on the

electricity line is still too great to handle normal continuous telephone calls although the quality of voice transmission on the Internet is improving.

When the Norweb Internet system is launched nationally it could mean tougher competition for BT in the second line market. The ability to keep the electricity line to the PC permanently open without facing ruinous charges could be very attractive to Internet users.

Some were already starting to speculate yesterday that Internet access via the electricity companies would be so fast and so cheap that a new dangerous monopoly was about to be created. That seems wide of the mark, at least at the moment.

There will be intense competition from those seeking to offer the most efficient way of linking up to the Internet — with the electricity utilities joining a list of contenders ranging from orthodox telecommunications companies to digital satellite and cable groups, not to forget Bill Gates and his latest toy Web TV, which will display the Internet on television screens with the help of a "black box".

The competition is good news for consumers. The relatively high cost of telecommunications in

Europe, compared with the US, has been one of the factors limiting the spread of the Internet in countries like the UK. At the very least the impact of providing the Internet via electricity wires should over time exercise downward pressure on data communications costs. For consumers and business — and Energis is pursuing similar technology for business users — it is clearly a case of the more routes to the information future the better.

William Hill enters finishing straight

As the sale of William Hill enters the final furlong, Brent Walker's syndicate of banks must be getting ready to throw their hats in the air. Just a year ago, when a flotation seemed a more likely option, the best estimates of the betting shop chain's worth were around the £450 million mark. This after-

noon the banks are expected to be asked to accept an offer of nearer £700 million from Nomura, whose appetite for UK deals has clearly not been sated by the recent £1.2 billion purchase of Intrepreneur and Spring Inns.

The decision by Sir Brian Goswell, Brent Walker's chairman, and Close Brothers, the company's financial adviser, not to rush the sale process has been fully vindicated. Over the past year the bookies have finally started to regain the ground lost to the National Lottery, and William Hill, number two in the market behind Ladbrokes, has seen its value soar.

Although some of that turnaround can be put down to a loosening of the regulatory regime by the Government, much of what has been achieved has been the result of a determination by the bookies to work together against the lottery by launching new games, such as 49s, while making betting shops

a more attractive environment for punters to visit.

But perhaps Sir Brian's biggest slice of luck was to hang on to the business long enough for Guy Hands, the innovative Nomura financier, to persuade his bosses of the wisdom of snapping up cash-generative businesses such as pubs and betting shops then securitising the cashflow. As a result, Nomura has shown itself willing to pay top-dollar for what are essentially mature businesses, outbidding more traditional equity deals backed by venture capitalists. Indeed, the Nomura bid for William Hill is understood to have trumped one by CVC Partners.

For the moment it appears that Mr Hands can do no wrong, but the question many City financiers are beginning to ask themselves is: Can he succeed? The last thing we need is another loss.

Walker board' or the banks. Their main concern is to make as big a dent as possible in the company's estimated £1.2 billion debt mountain, and £700 million for William Hill would leave a final bill of just £500 million for Brent Walker.

Not bad considering the devastation left behind by George Walker.

Escape from Canary Wharf?

Short-termism, that heinous City trait, might not taint the thinking of City practitioners so badly when their own fortunes are at stake rather than those of their clients. The promise of guaranteed bonuses for senior BZW staff prepared to hang around long enough to find out who their new masters will be was a blatant appeal to short-termist instincts. But there are signs that the play may not prove entirely successful.

Faced with the choice of a cash handout coupled with a plunge into the unknown or a comfortable desk with a leading player, BZW chaps are apparently being tempted to quit. That may mean sacrificing one bonus but there

will surely be another ahead — escape from Canary Wharf.

Few would envy Martin Taylor the task of selling a business when its assets are evaporating but it would have been hard to do any other way. Once the decision to back out of investment banking was taken, stitching up a neat deal on the quiet would have been very tricky. Any purchasers would have insisted on carrying out due diligence, and would have been spotted, adding to the uncertainties at BZW.

The good news for Mr Taylor is that there appears to be no shortage of potential purchasers. Assuming that the due diligence does not reveal any black holes, the price could bid up nicely. The Europeans are apparently making the running — Commerzbank and Paribas, while Credit Suisse First Boston, thought a front runner, rubs shoulders with BZW at Canary Wharf. Survivors may yet remain in their eastern confines.

Appetite lost

EARLIER this week, Gerald Abraham of Group Chef Gérard announced his expansion plans and declared that Britain was in for an unprecedented feast. Now we hear that the almighty PepsiCo is to splutter our high streets with yet more Pizza Huts and Kentucky Fried Chicken Shacks. This seems an outright contradiction of the early good tidings.

Young finds N Brown suits them

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

N BROWN, the mail-order group best known for serving the needs of the middle-aged and the outsize, has sharply increased its sales to younger customers.

First-half turnover was up by 18.9 per cent, to £156.2 million, with sales to people in their thirties and forties up by 29 per cent, to £28 million. People in their mid-forties to sixties spent £112 million, a rise of 15 per cent, while sales to older customers were up by 22 per cent, to £8 million.

Jim Martin, chief executive, said that he was "not actively thinking about" whether N Brown should make a second bid for Freemans if the Department of Trade and Industry bans Littlewoods from buying it. "We'd look at anything, but we have excellent strategies for organic growth," he said.

N Brown withdrew an offer to Sears for Freemans after disagreement over price, clearing the way for Littlewoods to come back with a second offer that is now before the competition

authorities. A decision is expected within the next month. N Brown's pre-tax profit in the six months to August 30 was 12.4 per cent higher, at £18 million. The interim dividend, payable on January 6, rises to 2.25p (2p) out of earnings up 14.7 per cent to 8.43p.

Margins were under pressure as spending on recruiting customers, delivering by courier and installing new operating systems rose in the first half.

The company is aiming for the men's sized catalogue market with a new catalogue named Trading Post. It offers men's clothes such as Wrangler with a waist size of up to 66 inches and Kickers shoes in sizes up to 14. Another area in which the company is seeking to expand is children's wear.

Mr Martin said that he was not unduly concerned about the entry of Marks & Spencer into mail order next spring because it is slightly upmarket of N Brown's catalogues. "I think it will add a level of interest and be good for consumers," he said.

Goldsmiths hit by Rolex rise

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

GOLDSMITHS, the jewellers run by Jurek Piasecki, went into the red in the first half because of high expansion costs and a sharp rise in the cost of Rolex watches.

The company opened six branches in the first half and will open a further nine in the next month. It plans another 20 next year and the same number the year after.

Trading profit was sharply lower after Rolex, a key brand, pushed prices higher leading to a sales rush in July 1996 that was not repeated this year.

In the six months to August 2, there was a pre-tax loss of £305,000, compared with a £54,000 profit a year ago. But the interim dividend, payable December 15, is increased by 14.6 per cent, to 2.75p per share. Same store sales were 5.6 per cent in the first half, or 9.9 per cent excluding Rolex.

Buyout at United Overseas

By FRASER NELSON

UNITED OVERSEAS, the newly floated company that sells end-of-stock kitchenware, toys and toiletries has bought out five of its joint venture partners for a total of £6.34 million.

The company, whose shares have risen by 35 per cent since it joined the market in April, has taken full ownership of Toy Wizards and UniTrade — which sell phased-out branded goods to high street chains including Woolworths and Asda.

Jeffrey Curtis, chief executive, said the company would be able to use the £20 million it raised on flotation to buy out the partners in its remaining two joint ventures if they meet performance targets. "This type of business has made us all very rich," he said. Its shares were unchanged at 92½p.

GGT London arm in 'critical' merger

By CHRIS AYRES

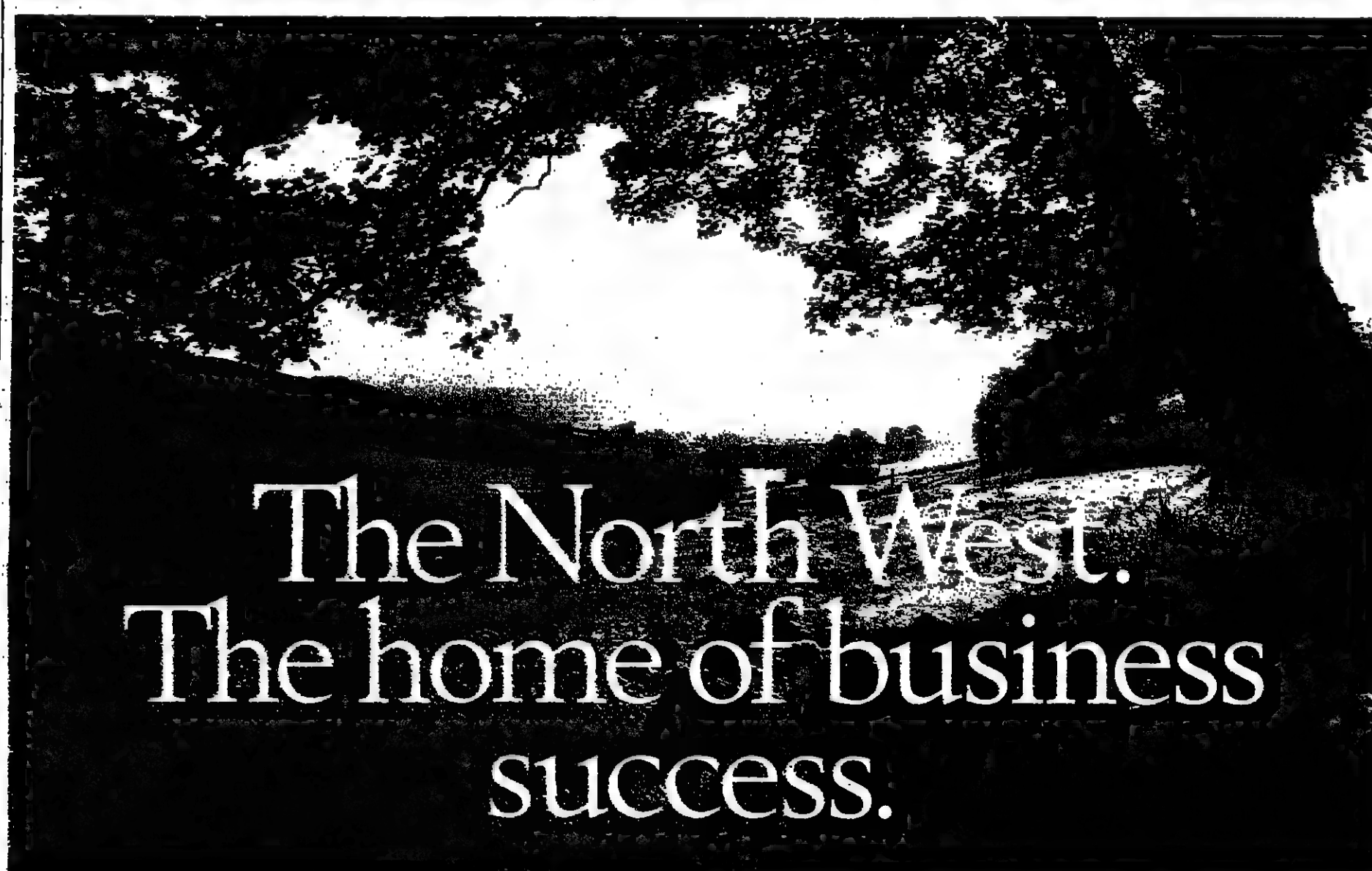
GGT, the advertising company which bought BDDP, its French rival, for £96 million in April, is set to create one of London's biggest agencies later this month.

The company plans to merge its London operations, GGT Advertising, with BST, the agency in which BDDP holds a 50.5 per cent stake. The move will involve GGT paying £2 million for the remaining 49.5 per cent stake held by BST's founders, John Sharkey and Paul Bainsfair.

The new agency, called BDDP GGT, will have combined billings of about £230

million and will share clients such as the BBC, Cadbury, Thomas Cook and Heinz. Michael Greenleaf, GGT chairman and chief executive, said: "This is a critical merger and we have put a lot of effort into seeing it through."

GGT estimates that the deal will save up to £300,000 by transferring BST's 60 staff to its headquarters in Soho, and ending the lease on BST's former premises. Mr Sharkey and Mr Bainsfair will become joint chairmen of BDDP GGT, with Grant Duncan, previously head of GGT Advertising, becoming managing director.



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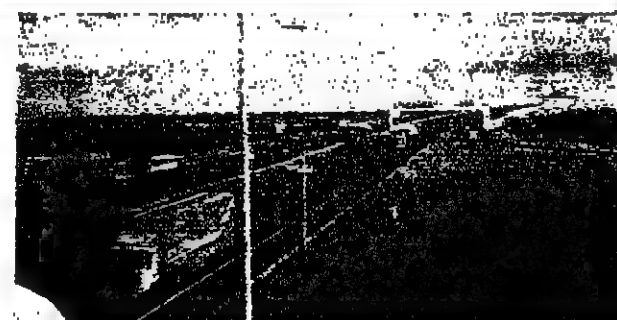
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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Greenspan torpedoed New York and London

THE broadside on American financial markets by Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve Chairman, sent share prices on both sides of the pond reeling.

In London, investors and traders alike were sent scurrying for cover as the Dow Jones Industrial average plunged 115 points in early trading. The FTSE 100 index responded with a 131.4 turn-around, as share prices saw an early gain of 61 points, which carried them towards their record highs, wiped out. Government bonds also fell sharply.

The index was able to reduce some of the fall to end 43.5 down at 5,262.1 as total turnover reached 955 million shares.

This time Greenspan has rocked the market by claiming that the bull run may be coming to an end. He warned the house budget committee that labour costs were set to rise and the economy was on an "unsustainable track". It was unrealistic to expect the gains achieved over the past two years to continue.

This is the third time during the past year that the Fed Chairman has stepped into the financial markets to put the record straight. Earlier this year, he knocked share prices for six on Wall Street by warning of "irrational over-enthusiasm".

British Aerospace came off its all-time high with a fall of 50p to 517.41p. The shares have been a firm market on revived talk of a merger with GEC, 12p off at 390p. Merrill Lynch, the broker, has reduced its recommendation on BAE from "buy" to "accumulate". It says bid talk may be a bit premature. Rival ABN Amro Hoare Govett is also said to be taking a more cautious stance on the shares.

Wolsey was a strong market, jumping 21p to 534p. Brokers say the builders' merchant is a "charity buy".

Cable & Wireless came off the boil, falling 17p to 557.2p on turnover of 6.15 million shares as brokers began taking the view that the group's strategy for gaining a foothold in the Chinese telecom market had suffered a setback.

British Telecom remained a dull market, losing a further 7p at 444.4p in the wake of the surprise rival bid for MCI WorldCom, which last week launched a \$30 billion counterbid for MCI, says it.



Support from George Soros raised African Lakes 7p

wants all three parties to sit round the table and resolve the matter. A further 37 million BT shares had changed hands by the close.

The oil sector got off to a flying start with Goldman Sachs, the US securities house, reckoned to be a big buyer of BP. The price touched 949p before reversing, along with the rest of the market, to finish 13p down at 936p.

29p as Dresdner Kleinwort Benson turned bearish of the oil price. Shell was also 10p cheaper at 472p, but Enterprise Oil put on 6p at 694p. Lame was 2p firmer at 284p as it played host to a party of analysts on a visit to the group's Italian operations.

Ladbroke rose 10p to 301p — its highest level since 1989 — amid growing hopes that it may win the management contract for Sheraton Hotels if the US Hilton Hotel wins control of ITT, which owns the hotel chain.

Stock shortages continued to push Reckitt & Coleman 16p better at 810.25p after positive comments from NatWest Securities, the broker, earlier this week raising the shares a "buy".

Billionaire financier George Soros is throwing his weight behind a rescue package for African Lakes Corporation. The troubled agricultural and mining group is raising £15.4 million via a placing and open offer at 40p. Soros Fund Management is among the companies taking up the new shares. African Lakes responded with a rise of 7p at 65p.

The property sector continued to respond to positive noises from both various brokers. Capital Shopping rose 13p to 444p, Chelfield 13p to 373p, Dacia Holdings 20p to £15.65, Grantchester 8p to 168p, Peel Holdings 15p to 631p and Pillar Property 13p to 281p.

The agreed bid from H&C Furnishings lifted Kingsbury Group 26p to 200p. The terms value Kingsbury at £47.6 million, or 185p a share. H&C was also left sporting a rise of 24p at 279p.

Capital Radio jumped 24p to 512p after Neil Black, at Merrill Lynch, the broker, told clients that advertising revenue was continuing to grow and the shares were too cheap.

Norfolk rose 6p to 349p after resolving its differences with Dedicated Micros, one of its biggest suppliers.

GILT-EDGED: Alan Greenspan's comments rounded off a gloomy performance by bonds. They closed at their low for the day, nursing falls of more than 1p at the longer end.

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Turnover falls 10% at Time

Time Products, the luxury goods group that distributes watches, yesterday blamed a 10 per cent fall, to £43.3 million, in its interim turnover on an exceptional, one-off individual purchase last year.

The company, which also supplies Sekonda watches, the biggest selling brand in the UK, has seen its share price plunge since describing last year's sales of £48.3 million as unusually high. Confidence in the group has also been depleted by the failure to make a profit again on the Judith Leiber handbag business that it purchased four years ago.

Leslie Michaels, finance director, said: "If you look at our results on a five-year basis we are having a boom. We just had exceptional sales last year." He admitted the company had not previously experienced a similar one-off surge in demand.

In spite of the fall in sales, Time lifted pre-tax profits by 10 per cent, from £9 million to £9.9 million, in the six months to July 31. The company said that it had benefited from a one-off £1.6 million profit from selling its former head office. Earnings per share increased from 11.29p to 12.43p, and a dividend of 4.9p, up from 4.5p, will be paid on January 9. The shares closed 3p down yesterday, at 260½p.

Losses deepen at Bolton FC

Burton Leisure, the parent company of Bolton Wanderers, the Premier League football club, reported a rise in pre-tax losses to £4 million, from £2.2 million, in the 14 months to June 30. Turnover was £5.4 million, compared with £4.8 million in the previous period. Losses per share deepened from 7.57p to 9.12p. A dividend of 0.5p will be paid on January 31. The company said that it had invested more than £30 million on developing its new 25,000-seater stadium, which is sponsored by Reebok, the sportswear manufacturer. The club has also recently spent £3.5 million on improving its squad of players.

SAirGroup pays £65m for BA's in-flight catering

By Jon Ashworth

THE last big plank in the British Airways disposal programme fell into place yesterday when the airline clinched the sale of its in-flight Heathrow catering division, pledging to protect perks and jobs.

Gate Gourmet, part of the SAirGroup, which owns Swissair, is paying £65 million for BA's catering arm, which employs 1,200 people in the long-haul catering side, producing about 25,000 meals a

day. Short-haul catering produces the same output again under a management contract that was awarded to Gate in 1982.

Gate will supply BA flights under a ten-year supply contract, subject to final negotiation. The deal largely completes the recent round of disposals by BA, which is seeking £1 billion in annual savings under its business efficiency programme.

BA is struggling to restore morale in the wake of this summer's damaging industrial action by cabin crew, and was eager to stress the human element.

Bob Ayling, the BA chief executive, said: "I am particularly pleased that we were able to sell the catering operation to a first-class employer like SAirGroup. We had a lot of interest, but one of the key issues for us was that the purchaser should be a company with a first-class reputation for employment."

Up to 9,000 BA ground staff threatened to strike over plans to sell catering, fearing a knock-on effect in pay cuts and job losses. Catering workers feared that they would lose their generous travel perks — including discounts of up to 90 per cent on flights — and were concerned that a new employer would bring longer hours and lower pay.

BA initially pledged to safeguard jobs, pay and discounts for up to three years after the division had been sold, and later sweetened the offer.

BA has denied seeking to turn itself into a "virtual airline" by parceling out various parts of its operation to outside contractors. In recent months BA has sold ground fleet services to Ryder, outsourced its IT operations, and streamlined its engineering division, selling wheels and brakes, and landing gear.

BA had intended to spin-off engineering and sell a stake in the business to outside investors, but decided to postpone the move until 2000. BA's Heathrow contract-handling unit was closed last year, with the loss of 750 jobs.

Contenders for the catering division included Alpha Airports Group, which handles BA catering at other airports in the United Kingdom, including Gatwick. Other potential buyers included LSC Sky Chefs, the world's largest in-flight caterer.

Gate Gourmet already serves BA from 21 airports worldwide. It is owned by SAIRelations, one of four corporate divisions within the SAirGroup, and employs 14,000 people, and supplies more than 250 airlines.

Intertech takeover makes CRT top in computer staffing

By Fraser Nelson

CRT, the recruitment and training company, has become the largest player in Britain's fast-growing market for contract computer staff with the £10.8 million takeover of the rival Intertech Computer Consultants.

CRT, which has been growing by 20 per cent a year on an underlying basis, will overtake Delpat to become market leader, with expected sales of £190 million for this year. MSB will be forced into third place.

Dennis Lynscoat and Jess Jaworski, two former computer programmers who set up Intertech ten years ago, will share £8.8 million in cash and

£2 million in CRT shares. Both will stay with the company.

Carl Chapman, chief executive of CRT, played down the expected work to come from the millennium computer bug, which, he said, has so far accounted for a minimal proportion of sales.

"The Year 2000 problem is an upward blip on an upward trend," he said. "The computer market is going to see steady growth over the next few years, but not an astronomical surge that some people are predicting."

Even after buying Intertech, CRT will have £45 million in its acquisition warchest. Mr Chapman said.

The acquisition takes CRT into the Internet programming market, adding to its existing presence in finding staff to work on old-style mainframe computer systems. Both Intertech offices will be shut, bringing an overall exceptional charge of £400,000.

Analysts upgraded CRT profit forecasts slightly to £20.6 million in this financial year, against £21.1 million last time.

Intertech has about 450 computer and other staff placed at any time, which will add to CRT's group total of 5,500. Computer recruitment will now be 77 per cent of group sales.



Chapman: takeover fund



Bill Simpson, left, Silentnight chief executive, and Barry McKenzie, finance director

Silentnight has dream start with UK trading

By Sarah Cunningham

SILENTNIGHT, the bed and cabinet furniture manufacturer, enjoyed a comfortable first half at home but experienced problems overseas.

Pre-tax profits in the six months to August 2 rose from £4.9 million to £5.8 million on turnover up 9 per cent to £107.6 million.

The UK beds division performed strongly, with operating profit up 63 per cent to £4.7 million. Most of the UK cabinet division also did well, with the exception of the Merced factory, bought in December 1996, which made a loss of £979,000. The company said that the loss should be reduced in the second half.

The picture was very different in the US, where a strong trading performance from the company's two bed factories was marred by an exceptional bad debt of £450,000 caused when Montgomery Ward, one of the biggest retailers in North America and a major customer, filed for insolvency.

Business conditions in Germany remained unfavourable and the group's mattress plant experienced intense pressure on both sales volumes and prices. Turnover fell 25 per cent and operating profit fell from £399,000 to £163,000.

The company will pay an interim dividend of 3.3p (3p) on January 2.

The shares were down 17½p yesterday at 315p, wiping out a large part of the 25p gain seen on Tuesday in anticipation of the results.

Airsprung blames management

By Sarah Cunningham

AIRSPRUNG Furniture, the Wiltshire-based furniture and upholstery maker, issued a profit warning yesterday, blaming "serious management shortcomings".

At the same time, it would be paying £300,000 compensation to the chief executive who left the company in August.

John Pierce was replaced in the post by Peter Ziemiak, the former chairman of the beds division. A review by Mr Ziemiak has

revealed management shortcomings and quality problems in the Show-wood components division and in Duckers Furniture.

Michael Coppel, chairman of Airsprung, said yesterday that he had been unaware of the problems when Mr Pierce left the company and that compensation was being paid to honour his contract.

Airsprung said that pre-tax profits in the six months to September 30 would be "sub-

stantially below market expectations" at about £1.5 million, including the £300,000 provision. Its shares fell 49p to 180½p.

The company made a pre-tax profit of £6.36 million last year and analysts had been expecting it to manage £8 million this year.

Mr Coppel said that the middle management at Show-wood had been replaced while up to 20 workers at Duckers were being made redundant. He said

that the problems at Show-wood had been connected with poor quality control and a high rate of returns from customers. At Duckers, the problem was that new labour-saving machinery had been installed in the spring but had not resulted in lower staff levels.

The company insisted that trading in the rest of the group is going well and that the group's "normal profit pattern" should return in the second half.

Go-between that saves the day

Michael Oldham looks at one alternative to calling in the receivers that can benefit all

THE past ten years have seen much change in the handling of ailing businesses. With the revised insolvency legislation of 1986 and the recession in the early Nineties, the concept of rescue has gained prominence as bankers and insolvency practitioners direct more energy to keeping businesses alive.

However, rescues for partnerships and sole traders have lacked a formal method for a qualified practitioner, acting as a creditor, to obtain direct control of a debtor business operating as a going concern because of the absence of powers of conventional security given by companies.

This has meant that the debtor has been left in control and the rescue plan monitored by the professional adviser. In many cases the imposition of an insolvency appointment may have destroyed a business that could have been saved.

Businesses experiencing difficulties require a mechanism for controlling early signs of insolvency and it is in these scenarios that the recently developed Asset Control Arrangement (ACA) can play a key role.

The technique was first employed in the management and disposal of a chain of franchise

restaurants. Although the chain had been profitable, there was cause for concern about future trading and management intentions. The view of the creditors was that disposal as a going concern was the best exit route.

In light of concerns about the business, the secured creditors wanted the assets and trading brought under the control of an experienced practitioner pending sale. We were reluctant to suggest that the secured creditor appointed us as Law of Property Act receiver of the leasehold properties as this was potentially damaging to asset value and could result in problems with landlord, licensing authorities, leasing companies, Crown creditors and, of course, the franchisor. We began brainstorming the idea of achieving control with our solicitors, Dibo Lupton Alsop, and the bank and developed the ACA. By acting as intermediaries between debtor, secured creditor and franchisor, we formulated a medium-term trading and disposal plan that was accepted by all parties. The documentation structure was then devised, including a power of attorney to two partners, giving us appropriate powers to operate the business.

The ACA proved strikingly successful. The business generated a trading profit in excess of expectations and was sold for a substantial sum after an extensive marketing campaign. After payment to the bank, the franchisor and business creditors, there was still a significant surplus to return to the owners. If receivers had been appointed, it is likely that all creditors would have suffered a considerable shortfall and the owners would have been bankrupt. The advantages of this arrangement are manifest, but



Michael Oldham says the ACA embraces rescue culture

simply and the ability to tailor each arrangement to a specific purpose are obvious. There is no stigma of an insolvency appointment, which might prejudice both attitudes and asset values and which also brings about statutory obligations. What is more, by acting as agents of disclosed principals, we are able to avoid the problem of personal liability to third parties. Where there is no floating charge, the power to trade may be questionable, but

by passing over all the powers held by the proprietors or board of the debtor, the ACA overcomes these difficulties. It is important to appreciate, too, that the technique has application even where it is not principally being driven by the demands of one major creditor; companies themselves may want to utilise it. Where directors are agreed on the need for change to operations, or perhaps the sale of assets, but divided on the means or methods, bringing in qualified outsiders to act within the scope of an agreed plan but with powers to see it through can benefit all.

The disadvantage of an ACA is that it does not automatically provide debtor protection against creditors while the ACA operates.

Even as things stand, we see significant application of the ACA approach to debt problems of property-based businesses. If this new technique were to be used regularly, then care would have to be taken to ensure that it did not become a cowboy's charter.

Although an ACA is not a salvation to all businesses, it can be extremely useful. It embraces the concept of rescue cultures and places day-to-day control of a business in the hands of experienced insolvency practitioners without the potentially destructive effects of an insolvency appointment.

□ The author is a corporate recovery partner in Pannell Kerr Forster, the accountant.

Auditor's eye turns to granny's welfare

FEW ACCOUNTANTS would say that the reason they came into the profession was to report on the health and welfare of other people's granules. Yet if you were to cross the Atlantic, you might find a different story. Over there, they think that the market for providing people with assurance that their "loved ones" are in good hands in whatever retirement or nursing home they have been placed will eventually equal the current audit market in terms of overall revenue.

It is the sort of view that provokes head-scratching over whether the Americans are really of this planet. However, this seemingly strange extension of the market in providing business assurance, as auditors now prefer it to be known, is the product of the sort of processes that are in train here.

In the UK, the main project looking at what the market will be for accountants in the future is the English ICA's "Chartered Accountants in 2005" initiative. In America, it is the American Institute's "Special Committee on Assurance Services", chaired by Bob Elliott of KPMG. Elliott broke a family holiday in the Cotswolds to talk to the English ICA at the end of last week.

It was an extraordinary presentation. The basic premise was the same as it is for accountants here — that the market is moving away from traditional accounting activities, and that new lines of work need to be created. However, the conclusions, by UK standards, were somewhat off the wall.

Elliott started, simply enough, by pointing out the great values of traditional audit work. It promotes honest security markets. It reduces the cost of capital. It improves liquidity. And the services retain a great deal of value to the profession. However, weighed against that are a number of other negating factors. There is the explosion of litigation. There is a saturated market: there are no great swaths of companies that remained unaudited and which the law is going to bring into the net. Technology is making inroads. Audit is becoming an unattractive part of the profession and may fail to lure great talent.

In the US, total audit revenues have not grown in real terms for several years. They have stuck at \$7 billion. This does not mean that people are no longer interested in the services auditors provide. It is that they are more interested in those services provided by

non-accountants. Financial statements dutifully certified by accountants are no longer the key information. "Demand for the information that accountants produce is flat," Elliott said. "The demand for information that other sources provide is skyrocketing." Hence the accountant's problem.

Elliott's answer is to broaden the assurance markets that accountants work in. He suggested a broader definition to start with, saying: "Assurance services are independent professional services that improve the quality of information content for decision-makers." That sounds almost hopeful. However, as Elliott emphasised, there is a catch. At present, US accountants have the \$7 billion market because, by law, no one else can do audits. Extending assurance into new markets means looking at fields in which accountants are not protected. Anyone can join this brave new world of assurance services. So accountants, with what Elliott categorised as their lack of nimbleness, their emphasis on regulations and their accounting mindset, are at a disadvantage.

Hence his committee's identification of different services. ElderCare is one of those new markets. Research apparently shows that people would be willing to pay a median \$500 a month for accountants to provide them with regular assurance on the healthcare regime to which their elderly relatives have been consigned. Another is the WebTrust mark. This icon appears on Websites. By clicking on it, a user is taken to financial information on the company whose site it is. The idea is that users can thus do some rudimentary due diligence work before entering a transaction. City-ing an insight into the speed at which the idea arose in January and that the product was rolled out last month.

Those are two of the more unusual ideas. Others included an "entity performance measurement" service and electronic assurances. They show what can be done. The intention, said Elliott, was "to keep rolling out new services and develop new competencies", so ensuring that the institute was "becoming market savvy". It is hard to envisage the English ICA becoming so market-driven, partly because the UK market is very different. However, accountants here should note what the Americans are doing. If only because they too will need to be looked after in old age.



ROBERT BRUCE

Summing up to end them all

HUGH ALDOUS, senior partner in Robson Rhodes, has always been an enterprising chap. And now he has come up with the ultimate defence should accountants fall foul of the courts. He has found a report of a case of alleged fraudulent accounting in Alberta, Canada. The judge is reported as summing up with: "You're guilty. I'm certain of that, but I simply can't bear to listen to your damned

accountant any longer. It is my observation that he is beyond a doubt the dullest witness I've ever had in my court. He speaks in a monotone voice so totally devoid of interest, and uses language so convoluted, that even the court reporter cannot stay conscious long enough to record his evidence properly. I've had it. Three solid days of his steady drone as he defends an obviously fraudulent set of

year-end accounts is enough. I cannot face the prospect of another 14 indictments. It's probably unethical, but I don't care. Case dismissed."

Moscow move

IT'S a bit like the old days of the Cold War. The first hint of trouble is a defection at the Moscow station. People have been scouring the offices of Price Waterhouse and Coopers

& Lybrand as the two firms prepare to face up a merger. Tales of worried partners abound. Now, Robert Fort, head of PW's financial services tax group, has announced that he is to jump ship. He is to join the Moscow office of Clifford Chance, the law firm. Fort is upbeat about his defection. "Having worked closely with Clifford Chance in Moscow over the last two years, I am proud to be joining such an

outstanding firm," he said. Old comrades, obviously.

Name game

TIM PRIZEMAN, the veteran accountancy PR man, set up on his own a while back after stints at Deloitte & Touche and Arthur Andersen. His new enterprise, based in the City, goes by the name of Kelso Consulting. And now his niche has been recognised. A restaurant has opened up beneath his office. It is called "Propaganda".

ROBERT BRUCE

Win a gourmet dinner for 1

Former geologist at Bre-X 'ran fraud'

By George Sivell

INVESTIGATORS hired by Bre-X Minerals of Canada said that Michael de Guzman, who died while employed as the company's chief geologist, orchestrated the world's biggest gold swindle.

A report from the private investigators states that de Guzman, who died after falling from a helicopter, ordered an employee to add gold to worthless samples of barren rock in 1993 in an attempt to keep Bre-X Minerals from closing Bingham, its Indonesian exploration project once hailed as the world's largest gold deposit.

Bre-X released a three-page summary of the agency's 430-page interim report by Forensic Investigative Associates. It stated that de Guzman made millions in profits before the four-year tampering operation was exposed earlier this year.

The report said there were plans to stop the drilling at the Borneo site after tests proved to be barren. But instead, the investigators said they had "reasonable and probable grounds to believe that de Guzman directed a Bre-X geologist, Cesar Puspas, to salt samples with alluvial gold to prevent the company from shutting down the project."

Simplicio "Jojo" de Guzman, de Guzman's younger brother, said the geologist did not make millions in profits as claimed. His family believes he was murdered.



Geoffrey Woods, of Bridport-Gundry, which supplies spares for British-made military aircraft throughout the world

Aviation service firm 80% ahead

BRIDPORT-GUNDRY, the aviation and defence services company that has grown out of the old Dorset fishing-net business, raised pre-tax profits by 80 per cent to £2.61 million in the year to July 31.

The disposal of the last of Bridport-Gundry's traditional textile businesses raised £2 million in the year, and the company is to change its name to Bridport.

Earnings per share rose by 11 per cent, to 10.2p, out of which the total dividend rises to 4.5p, up 12.6 per cent. The group ended the year with net cash of £2.7 million, an improvement from net debt of £2.4 million the previous year.

Geoffrey Woods, chief executive, said: "We intend to use our cash flow and balance sheet to fund complementary acquisitions."

Microsoft faces legal threat over computer language

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

MICROSOFT is facing a serious legal threat that could halt its product roll-out as a bitter dispute over the software group's monopoly position escalates.

Sun Microsystems is suing Microsoft over the use of Sun's Java computer language. Sun claimed that Microsoft, which is licensed to integrate Java into its software, manipulated the language so as to favour its own Windows programs over competitors' programs.

Sun wants to protect the purity of Java to make computers compatible worldwide.

It wants Microsoft to stop using its adapted version of Java and has threatened to revoke its licensing agreement.

Microsoft responded by saying that Sun's claims were "outrageous and completely unfounded". It denied violating any agreements and said Sun was merely trying to keep control over a potentially very lucrative product.

Microsoft is also facing a monopoly investigation from attorneys-general in four US states. Investigators from California, New York, Minnesota and Connecticut are prepar-

ing to file a lawsuit against Microsoft before the launch of the new Windows program in spring.

Richard Blumenthal, Connecticut attorney-general, said Microsoft could be guilty of pressuring computer-makers into using its software, exclusively. He said: "What we are looking at is the alleged monopoly concerning Microsoft software." Similar investigations are under way in Texas and Massachusetts.

Over recent weeks Microsoft has increasingly been confronted with the un-

ited wrath of anti-trust campaigners, industry rivals and state regulators over its estimated 80 per cent share of the software market. A US Senate sub-committee will hold hearings on anti-competitive practices in the computer industry, while key consumer groups are lobbying the Justice Department to start a predatory pricing investigation.

In the most significant commercial setback, Intel, the semiconductor manufacturer, has rejected Microsoft's new digital cable television standard and is backing an alter-

native developed by Oracle. Microsoft is competing with a group of software houses led by Oracle to define the way that cable television viewers will have access to the Internet. Cable technology is to be made interactive, giving cable viewers access to electronic mail, home shopping, video games and films.

Microsoft has invested heavily in the technology which is deemed to open up lucrative retail markets. In June it invested \$1 billion in Comcast, America's fourth-largest cable operator.

EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

Gyrus hopes for £10m from float

By Paul Durman

GYRUS GROUP, a designer of electro-surgical tools for keyhole surgery, is hoping to raise £10 million in a flotation that should value the company at £45 million or more.

This will give Mark and Colin Goble, the brothers who founded Gyrus in 1989, a holding worth about £12 million. Neither brother plans to sell shares in the float.

Gyrus's first two products — cutting tools that vaporise tissue when an electric current is passed between electrodes — have been approved by US regulators and are being sold by Ethicon, part of Johnson & Johnson, and Gynecare, an American company specialising in women's health. Orders for the AxiPolar and AxiPlus electrodes are ahead of forecasts made when they were launched a few months ago.

Gyrus expects to lose £4 million this year. However, product launches are intended to take it into profit in 2000.

Herion acquisition lifts shares in IMI

By Our City Staff

IMI, the international engineering group, has agreed to acquire Herion-Werke, a German manufacturer of pneumatic control valves, for a total of DM 245 million (about £86 million), it was announced yesterday.

IMI is paying DM 110 million in cash and assuming debts of DM135 million. Herion, based near Stuttgart,

is a leading supplier of valves to the European manufacturing industry. In 1996 the company earned DM 14 million before interest and tax on sales of DM 334 million. Net assets are estimated at DM 75 million after deducting the debt assumed.

The company has five sales and distribution subsidiaries around the world. IMI said Herion's success in specialised valve technology was based on innovative research and development.

IMI, whose chief executive is Gary Allen, said the acquisition will be funded from existing bank facilities. The acquisition is expected to enhance earnings per share after 1998. Herion will become part of IMI's fluid power group of companies. Completion is expected by the end of November, subject to regulatory clearances.

IMI shares rose 8½p to 424½p yesterday, their highest level in more than five years.



Allen: buying top supplier

Triplex Lloyd ends talks

By George Sivell

SHARES in Triplex Lloyd rose 10p to 225p yesterday after the engineering group said that it had ended discussions with a potential bidder.

The shares have risen steeply since touching a low for the year of 154p in August, and the group is worth around £150 million on the stock market.

Triplex said: "After careful consideration of the company's position and prospects, the board concluded that such discussions were unlikely to

lead to an offer capable of being recommended to shareholders, and discussions have effectively terminated."

Analysts said that any bid for Triplex would be at about 260p to 270p and that the group had effectively put itself "into play" by making the announcement. Triplex earlier this year lost a battle to acquire William Cook, the steel castings group, for £75 million.

One broker said that the announcement "implies that

the Triplex board would have recommended the offer if the price had been right."

Some dealers said that they expect a hostile bidder to emerge for the group in the near future. One analyst said: "The company has effectively put itself into play. There are a number of specialist engineering companies who would be interested."

A bid of 260p to 270p a share would indicate an offer at £170 million to £180 million.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Public 'unaware of ombudsman schemes'

OMBUDSMAN schemes to deal with consumer complaints are being hampered because too few people know about them, a watchdog warns today. Public awareness of ombudsmen was very low, with even the best known scheme, the Banking Ombudsman, only recognised by 42 per cent of people, according to a survey. More people claimed to have heard of the Travel Industry Ombudsman than the Pensions Ombudsman — although the travel scheme does not exist, said the report, by the Consumers' Association. It also called for regulation of the rapidly rising number of industry-run schemes covering services from estate agents to funerals.

Unless an agreed standard was drawn up for all ombudsmen, it would be impossible for consumers to know if the schemes really offered a fair, independent and effective arbitration service or were simply a public relations exercise, the report said. However, it added that ombudsman schemes did provide a useful, cheap and flexible way of resolving problems between consumers and companies without resorting to legal action.

Stagecoach adds to fleet

STAGECOACH, the transport company, announced a multi-million pound order for 515 new buses to improve its nationwide fleet. The Perth company, which operates 7,500 vehicles, said the order would reduce the average age of its fleet to seven years, against an industry average of ten. The order includes chassis built by MAN, Dennis, Volvo and Mercedes, and bodies made by Alexander and Jonckheere. Brian Souter, chairman, said: "We remain convinced that the introduction of new vehicles generates a significant cost advantage."

Loral to buy Orion

LORAL Space & Communications, the satellite group based in New York, has agreed to buy Orion Network Systems, whose satellite system will soon be able to provide services to 85 per cent of the world's population. The share deal values Orion at about \$490 million (£302 million) and extends Loral's reach beyond US borders. Orion, based in Maryland, operates one of the first privately owned international satellite communications systems, serving 350 multinational companies and Internet service providers in 47 countries. It owns the Orion 1 satellite and has two more satellites under construction.

Hamanaka bank move

SUMITOMO CORP, the Japanese trading house, said on Wednesday that Swiss authorities had given it permission to confiscate a secret bank account held by its disgraced former head copper trader Yasuo Hamanaka. In June 1996, Sumitomo announced losses of \$2.6 billion (£1.6 billion), which it said were due to unauthorised deals by Hamanaka. It has been reported in the Japanese press that the account held around SF1 million (£427,000). Hamanaka has pleaded guilty at the Tokyo District Court to charges of fraud and forgery in connection with the unauthorised trades.

Daimler switches to euro

DAIMLER-BENZ, Germany's largest company, is to adopt the euro as its official house currency from 1999, it was announced yesterday. Daimler said the cost of the switchover would come to DM200 million (about £70 million) but that it would reduce currency market exposure by 30 per cent. Juergen Schrempf, the company's chairman, has been an outspoken advocate of European monetary union, saying it would help to protect the company from swings in the mark's value against other European currencies. Daimler has been a leader in adopting new accounting procedures.

Europe's high flyers

MAJOR west European airlines showed a 10 per cent year-on-year rise in passenger traffic for August, continuing a powerful growth trend, the Association of European Airlines (AEA) said yesterday. Intra-European traffic increased 11.6 per cent. On long-haul routes 81.6 per cent of the seats were sold and intra-European load factors reached a 70.2 per cent high. Karl-Heinz Neumeister, AEA Secretary-General, said: "During the last few years the month of August has become the busiest month of the year for air travel." Every day during August more than half a million passengers crossed borders on AEA member airlines.

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— *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997

1000

Street smarts in the myths of time

NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown sees

Disney tackle the classics, and come up with a treat called *Hercules*

You all know Hercules. Nice lad, son of Zeus. Bulging calves, jutting chin, weird triangular feet. Friends call him Herc. At least, this is the chap who takes the lead in Disney's latest cartoon.

Scholars of Greek mythology may tut-tut, but they were not the audience the directors John Musker and Ron Clements had in mind. This is a movie styled and paced to suit frantic young minds, for whom even the 1970s are ancient times.

The point is made at the beginning, when a serious commentator is kicked off the soundtrack by gospel-singing Muses adorning a frieze on a museum vase. Then we are whisked to Mount Olympus to celebrate Herc's birth. Then we meet his adversary Hades, God of the Underworld, blue head flaming like a gas jet, sardonic words tumbling out of his mouth, courtesy of James Woods. "I haven't been this choked up," he sneers, "since I got a lump of moussaka stuck in my throat."

Wit, as you can see, does not scale the Olympian heights, although the film's visual design offers something different from the norm. Gerald Scarfe was hired as production designer and, while there is no room for the extreme savagery of his political cartoons, enough bulbous noses, spindly limbs and ornamental details crop up to remind us of his presence.

Several voice artists make their own mark. Woods' taunting tones provide the perfect accompaniment as Hades tries to stop Hercules regaining his place among the gods. Danny DeVito appears inseparable from Philoctetes (call him Phil), satyr, sidekick and personal trainer who helps Herc to prove his mettle. Other contributions are more mundane; none more so than that of Alan Menken and David Zippel, composer and lyricist, whose songs are obstinately unmemorable.

The dialogue, at best, always tries to be light and breezy. "Thanks for everything, Herc. It's been a real slice," says a rescued damsel in distress. The same lip tone informs the in-jokes, which include digs at the merchandising phenomenon. Disney knows this subject well: more than 300 companies and retailers have been licensed to sell *Hercules* products. Forget its distorted reflection of ancient Greek myths, this movie — flip, fast and brazen — puts today's world in a nutshell.

Nil by Mouth, written and directed by Gary Oldman, presents another picture of modern life. It is not pretty. The setting is a grim housing estate in South London (Oldman's stamping ground). The language is rough, the action rougher. There is nothing to hope for: days pass in petty crime, drug use and rampaging. Noses get bitten, apartments trashed, and a pregnant wife is kicked by her alcohol-soaked husband. It rains a lot, too.

But there is more to Oldman's directorial debut than a celebration of misery. Oldman knows these people — the film is pointedly dedicated to the memory of his father — and he refuses to act the moralist. He gives them a community spirit, and allows the family's grandsons to sing *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man* even when the men include Ray Winstone's husband, violent to a psychotic degree. As in the films of Oldman's artistic mentors, Alan Clarke and John Cassavetes, the camera stays close to faces, observing with affection, not distaste.

The actors are strong enough to take the intense scrutiny. Winstone is powerfully unsettling. Kathy Burke unnerves in a different way as the wife so wearied by life that even an enforced miscarriage from her husband's boot fails to stir much of a fight. Overlong it may be (the early scenes particularly need trimming), but this is a film of startling power and compassion.

Remaining in the same country, if it definitely not the same mood, *House of America* is a trip to a dead-end town in Wales. Not that the characters would acknowledge actually living there. Teenagers Sid and Gwenny (Steven Mackintosh and Lisa Palfrey) dream about going on the road across the States, like their hero, Jack Kerouac. Marn, clouded by mental illness, lives in her own world. As for Dad, he flew the nest 15 years before, and is believed to be in America itself, although

Hercules
Odeon Leicester Square
U, 91 mins
Greek mythology is Disneyfied

Nil by Mouth
Virgin Haymarket
18, 139 mins
Gary Oldman's searing directorial debut

House of America
ABC Shaftesbury Ave
15, 96 mins
Ambitious kitchen sink fantasy from Wales

The Game
Empire, 18, 128 mins
Michael Douglas caught in a practical joke

Tempress Moon
Curzon West End
14, 116 mins
Chen Kaige's opium dream

Pusher
ICA Cinema, 18, 105 mins
Gritty drama from Denmark

Father's Day
Warner West End
12, 99 mins
Robin Williams and Billy Crystal in a futile hunt for laughs

with Marc Evans's version of Edward Thomas's play it is wise not to take such things for granted.

This ambitious film initially beguiles with its portrait of restless, likeable kids using the American Dream to colour their bleak lives. There is also a rock soundtrack to enjoy. But the mix of realism, fantasy and melodrama grows unsatisfactory, the film's dramatic focus grows blurred, and Sian Phillips has her work cut out making her mad Marn a figure worth our understanding. This is Evans's first feature, after much television work: for all its faults, it should serve as a respectable calling card.

True to its title, David Fincher's *The Game* delights in play-acting. Consider the predicament of Michael Douglas, a successful San Francisco businessman whose hollow life proceeds like clockwork. Until, that is, his 48th birthday, when his brother (Sean Penn) hands him a gift certificate for an outfit called Consumer Recreation Services. "We're like an experiential Book of the Month Club," their front man purrs. Once locked into the Game, as they call it, Douglas is chased black and blue and discredited in business. He loses his house, and almost his life.

Fincher directed last year's hit thriller *Seven* and is at his



Hades, ruler of the Underworld and enemy of our eponymous hero in *Hercules*. He could, of course, have been called Pluto, but every Disney fan knows that Pluto is a dog

happiest with in-your-face artifice. And, for a while, this teasing movie has the audience in its grip. Douglas's bemusement becomes ours as action set pieces yank him this way and that, and cyberspace demons undermine his identity. (The writers, John Brancato and Michael Ferris, like this trick: remember their previous opus, *The Nerd*.) Then, as the film soldiers on towards the two-hour mark, you feel the callous bravura of Fincher's visual style and the script's conceits. The movie ends up just like the Game itself: an elaborate practical joke, more cruel than entertaining.

By the nature of things, the actors do not have much scope for fireworks, although Penn makes the most of his brief appearances and Deborah Kara Unger is nicely enigmatic as the woman who leads Douglas as the merry dance. After playing *The Game* you will need relaxation. So how about *Tempress Moon*, a film drenched in an opium haze from Chen Kaige, the director of *Farewell My Concubine*. The story has its knots, even in the streamlined version released in the West (14 minutes shorter than the original). But there is nothing to stop us basking in the opulence of 1920s Shanghai and environs, where drugged

beauties lie swathed in luscious fabrics under swaying lanterns. Nothing to stop us stargazing, either. There are two to gawp at, both luminaries of Hong Kong and beyond. Leslie Cheung takes the male role, a Shanghai gigolo who haunts the decaying house of an aristocratic family, where he lived as a child. But the camera only has eyes for Gong Li, head of the household, who makes the kind of grand movie entrance once reserved for Greta Garbo, and hogs the close-ups, misty-eyed with tears.

In theory, Chen undertook this material to muse on the parallels between the confusions of the Republic's early years and the contradictions of modern China. In practice, few parallels peep through the beady melodrama. This is a film of visual wonders (praise be to cameraman Christopher Doyle, one of the world's best); but little meaning or relevance lingers.

The Danish film *Pusher* is a gritty, quasi-documentary look at seven days in the life of a drugs pusher. He is Nicolas Winding Refn: a name to watch and spell correctly. The pusher starts off cocky and successful; he ends desperate-

ly chasing debts to save himself from the mortuary slab. The hand-held camera lurches from face to face, a trick too many directors seem to think induces instant reality. But there is nothing phoney about the film's stark power.

When a film stars both Robin Williams and Billy Crystal, which one do you laugh at? The answer in *Father's Day* is neither. This tepid remake of a French farce, *Les Compères*, casts them, respectively, as a failed writer and high-powered lawyer faced with the prospect that they have fathered a teenage son. Weak jokes and unearned sentiment combine to produce one of the year's most unnecessary offerings.

Oldman triumph

Every week, young film fans discuss some of the latest releases...

■ NIL BY MOUTH
Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 19: Ray Winstone will break your heart. Gary Oldman has given us a beautifully observed film.

Melita Mihetic, 18: Kathy Burke is good, but best actress at Cannes? I think not. John Osmond, 19: Not an easy film to watch. A highly authentic representation of council estate life. Dominic Young, 18: A film that will stay with you for

many weeks. Don't forget to take the Kleenex.

■ FATHER'S DAY
Leslie: Those comedy heavyweights Robin Williams and Billy Crystal should have provided much mirth. They did not. Melita: A laugh a day. Stay clear.

John: Mel Gibson's brief comic turn as a heavily pierced rocker supplies the film's only fun. Dominic: Williams is at times quite moving; shame nobody told him he was doing a comedy.

■ THE GAME
Leslie: Confused? You will be. Unusually for Hollywood this film is over-written and complicated. Melita: Michael Douglas's best performance to date. John: Not a work of art, but ace, chilling entertainment. Dominic: Sean Penn is, as always, dead good. Not a bad movie, just a confusing one.

NEW ON VIDEO

PRINCESS DIANA COMMEMORATIVE VIDEOS
WHICH do you pick, the BBC's *Diana: A Celebration* or *Diana: The People's Princess* from ITN? The BBC's, narrated mainly by Moira Stuart, adopts the dull, reverential line, begins with the funeral and works backwards. ITN's, narrated by Trevor McDonald, accepts Diana, Princess of Wales more as a flawed human being, and builds up to the funeral after a wider portrait of her life. At 78 minutes, ITN's is better value than the BBC's (only 55 minutes long), while neither includes Elton John singing *Candle in the Wind* in Westminster Abbey.

SECRETS & LIES
VCI/Film Four, 15, 1996
CLAUSTROPHOBIC suburban lives have long been Mike Leigh's speciality, but in this film, now available to buy, he treats them with new compassion. Brenda Blethyn is the sad, nervous mother faced with a skeleton from the past: the black daughter (Marianne Jean-Baptiste) she gave up for adoption. Shifts in tone cause awkwardness at times, and some scenes need the editor's scissors. But there is real maturity here, and a refreshing tenderness to Leigh's treatment of lives in pain.

STAR WARS TRILOGY
Fox Guild, U
THE Special Editions of all three *Star Wars* movies hit the shops. You can buy them singly or as a package, in two different versions (standard ratio or widescreen). Each cassette includes behind-the-scenes footage, featuring interviews with George Lucas and the technicians who helped to clean up the soundtracks and enhance the visuals.

THE SUNCHASER
Warner, 15, 1996
A FRIGGISH doctor (Woody Harrison) is forced at gunpoint to take Jon Seda's young prisoner, dying of cancer, to a sacred Navajo mountain. Director Michael Cimino tries to turn this road movie into a report on the state of the nation. He fills the screen with clever arrangements of rock, sand and Tarnac, and some choice visual conceits. But the script cannot sustain such fancy treatment, and the clichés multiply as doc and patient make their journey from LA's ghettos to the peaks of Colorado. Available to rent.

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AND AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Five operas written by Ralph Vaughan Williams are getting a fresh airing. Mike Ashman reports

Glorious operatic Albion

The 20th century has not been over-kind to the operas of Ralph Vaughan Williams. By this year, the 125th anniversary of the composer's birth, some are being made. On the initiative of Stephen Connock, chairman of the Vaughan Williams Society, a "Vision of Albion" Festival has been put together under the conductor Richard Hickox, who led the first ever complete cycle of the symphonies in a parallel 1995 event. With sponsorship for performances and recordings (in Hickox's ongoing series of British music for Chandos), three orchestras, and the Royal Opera's interest in re-examining work to which it gave birth, all five main operas receive an outing.

The impression clung that they were meant for amateurs

Aders to the Sea (half an hour or so of concentrated masterpiece), says Hickox, the Falstaff opera Sir John in Love (absolutely delicious", says Ursula Vaughan Williams, the composer's widow), and The Pilgrim's Progress (no hero in and no love duets and it's what I want", said the composer) will have performances with varying degrees of movement. The Pilgrim — the last and grandest opera — will be staged by Joseph Ward, director of a fêted Manchester student production, and recorded for the second time professionally.

The Poet's Kiss ("marvelous music but dialogue beyond hope" says Michael Kennedy, the composer's biographer) will be heard in substantial excerpts, as was (last week) part of *Hugh the Drover*, in the form of the suite *A Oswald Romance* made under Vaughan Williams's supervision. Hickox, Connock, Ursula Vaughan Williams and Kennedy are unanimous not just in their enthusiasm for the music of these operas, but in a desire to proselytise their knowledge. But if this repertoire is so "seriously neglected" (Connock), why has it not been taken through till now? Ursula Vaughan Williams believes her husband made a great mistake in trying out so many pieces in student surroundings. *Hugh, Sir John, Riders* and scenes from *The Pilgrim* were all premiered by the Royal College of Music, a

"wrong connotation" for the works, she thinks. This idea came from Vaughan Williams's beloved "musical citizenship policy", says Kennedy. He loved to see his works performed by amateur or semi-professional forces, but the impression clung that they were intended for amateurs.

Also, the librettos were often problematic when written by other hands, or dramatic in a way that needed careful handling. "The Pilgrim is not a theatrical piece in terms of, say, *Grimes*", says Hickox. But he is confident of finding "the dramatic impetus" to make it "vivid and not churchy".

There were also production problems at a postwar Royal Opera House that felt unconfident about British work. "Bloody Covent Garden," says Ursula Vaughan Williams of the 1951 premiere, "chose a bad producer (the famous Chaucer scholar, Neville Coghill) who then chose a terrible designer."

Connock believes that the less cynical, gentler age of the late 1990s is ready again for "more melody-based, populist" opera. He points out that high quality British champions are in the field again, mentioning alongside Hickox such conductors as Andrew Davis and Matthew Best, and singers like Bryn Terfel (in the concert hall) and what Hickox calls "the cream of young British talent" in the casts of these opera performances.



His supporters believe the music of Vaughan Williams will be better received in the late Nineties than in the Fifties

Unfortunately, British opera managements are addicted to pigeonholing composers. The variety of Vaughan Williams's operatic output confuses and defies such thinking. It is no accident that *Riders* is a takeover of an established play by J.M. Synge — with its sound world akin to Bartók or Ravel, is the only score to date to establish a threshold in the British repertoire. The remaining works fit no such easy glove. *Hugh the Drover* probably suffered more from its war-delayed premiere than from Harold Child's stiff libretto. If it had been performed alongside Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers*, Holst's *Savitri* or some Holbrooke (time for a Hickox rediscovery?), there might have been more of the "British" opera school that Vaughan Williams

feared would never happen. In addition to the operas, the Vision of Albion Festival visits Clerkenwell for a trio of chamber music concerts in November, and is at the Barbican Cinema this month for screenings and discussions on some of the films the composer scored and reused in the concert hall: *Scott of the Antarctic*, *The England of Elizabeth*. An enlarged version of Wilfrid Mellers's book *Vaughan Williams and the Vision of Albion* and a new collection of essays edited by Lewis Foreman appear in literary support. Meanwhile Connock contemplates a third festival of the composer's choral music — "at least 30 pieces no one ever hears".

Richard Hickox conducts Sir John in Love on Sunday (3.30pm) at the Barbican (0171-638 8891)

NEW CLASSICAL CDs: McCartney, Gershwin and some serious Mozart

ORCHESTRAL

Hilary Finch

■ PAUL MCCARTNEY

Standing Stone LSO/Foster EMI 5 59484 2, no stars £14.99 ON "THE basis that "the Pharaohs didn't write, they employed people to do the job for them", Paul McCartney has hired several composers to help him with his four-movement symphonic poem. His tunes were first computer-notated by Steve Loder, then decoded by David Matthews. The work was architect-designed by John Harle, while Richard Rodney Bennett was "overall supervisor of orchestration". So credit is given where credit is due.

In his search for his Celtic roots, McCartney sounds intermittently diverted, often defeated. To be equal to the task is asking a lot, as Milton, Dante, Beethoven and Mahler discovered before him; and there has to be a little more to a symphony than shortlived, formulaic melody, anodyne harmony and the odd jig.

Abstraction is simply not McCartney's forte. I wish he had made a song-cycle out of his own good *Standing Stone* Poem printed in the booklet. Music unsupported by words is extremely difficult to write, and one day McCartney may (or may not) like to have a chat with his fellow Celt, James MacMillan, to discuss some of the ways in which it is done. Meanwhile, *Standing Stone* is a sad monument: it is tired, it is middle-aged, it is, essentially, background music.

INSTRUMENTAL

Barry Millington

■ GERSHWIN

I Got Rhythm Aalborg Symphony/Marshall Virgin VM 5 61478 2 ***. £10.49 ONE would not normally turn to Denmark for a Gershwin ensemble, but with the irrepressible Wayne Marshall in command, the results are admirably idiomatic.

The first and last movements of the Piano Concerto in F career along at hair-raising speeds, and the Aalborgers toss off those syncopated jazz rhythms as though to the manner born. Marshall is of course wholly in his element here, though just occasionally it seems as if his virtuosity is allowed to run away with him. The *Rhapsody in Blue* and less familiar *Second Rhapsody* are wild and boisterous, with the right amount of

OPERA

John Higgins

■ MOZART

Don Giovanni Fleming/Murray/Terfel/Pertusi/LPO/Solti Decca 455 500-2 (three CDs) *** £38.99 THE sunlit Mozart of Solti's recent years gives way to darker shadows in *Don Giovanni*, recorded at the Festival Hall a year ago. All the old force is there, especially in the finales to both acts. But the speeds are often slow and the smiles are few. This is a serious *Giovanni*.

Bryn Terfel's *Giovanni* is an aggressive Jack-the-Lad, fine when he is on the hunt or fighting for his life. He is less successful as the suave seducer and here Michele Pertusi, his sardonic and polished Leporello, could show him a thing or two. Both are expert in each other's roles.

Renée Fleming's Anna is outstanding throughout and Monica Groop is a toothsome and sweetly accurate Zerlina. But Ann Murray's Elvira is a disappointment: plenty of character but too often a shrewish edge to the voice. By contrast Herbert Lippert's vocally well-schooled Ottavio lacks dramatic thrust.

★ Worth hearing
★★ Worth considering
★★★ Worth buying

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Pared right down to the singing bone

KENT NAGANO and the Hallé Orchestra are making a niche for themselves, it seems, by restoring discarded versions of works better known in revised form — such as the four-act *Billy Budd* they performed and recorded last May, and now their original three-movement version of Mahler's *Das klagende Lied*.

In that the work has never been heard before as Mahler first scored it in 1880 — not only with the opening movement he excised 13 years later, but also with the extravagant orchestration he reduced at the same time — it was a first performance of a kind. Certainly, it attracted an impressive representation of Mahler experts to the Bridgewater Hall, provoked a companion symposium on *Mahler the Revisionist* and inspired a handsomely produced (if not entirely helpful or uniformly well written) programme book.

CONCERT

Hallé/Nagano
Manchester

But the opportunity to hear this remarkable score was welcome. There is scarcely one sound or gesture — bar those with direct Wagnerian antecedents — that cannot be traced into future works by Mahler. Obviously, early works such as the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and the First Symphony most often come to mind, but some of the musical symbolism retained its significance for decades after that. He would never again demand as many as six harps: he sensibly reduced the requirement to two. And though he remained firmly attached to the offstage

band, he would never again present one in a key a semitone away from that of the instruments on the platform.

Another feature he removed was a boy's voice to represent the singing bone (Mahler's text owes much to the Brothers Grimm) that reveals the bridegroom's guilty secret at the royal wedding feast in the last movement. Listening to this Hallé performance, in which the treble part proved too much for four boys, one can see why. Marina Shaguch, no doubt regretting losing this section from the soprano part she is used to. In fact, although Ludwiga Rappe and Hakan Hagegard sang well, and although the orchestral playing was competent and often effective, much work must be done before the performance is recorded.

GERALD LARNER

Artists to their fingertips

JOHN HIATT has had his songs covered by everyone from Bob Dylan to Iggy Pop and from Willy Nelson to Phil Spector. He has also survived Little Village, a supergroup whose cohabitants included Nick Lowe and Ry Cooder.

POP

The plush decor and pitch-perfect acoustics of Dublin's Olympia always seem to bring the best out of performers, and so it proved with Hiatt and his band, the Nashville Queens.



Of course, top breeders have always recommended Nashville-based players, and the quality of the musicianship on show was quite staggering. When you have got guys of this calibre together on stage, there is always the danger that the show will descend into a self-indulgent musical love-in. But David Immergluck (guitar), Davey Faragher (bass) and Gary Ferguson (drums) were as tight-knit a unit as one could hope for, their technical mastery embellishing but never enveloping the songs.

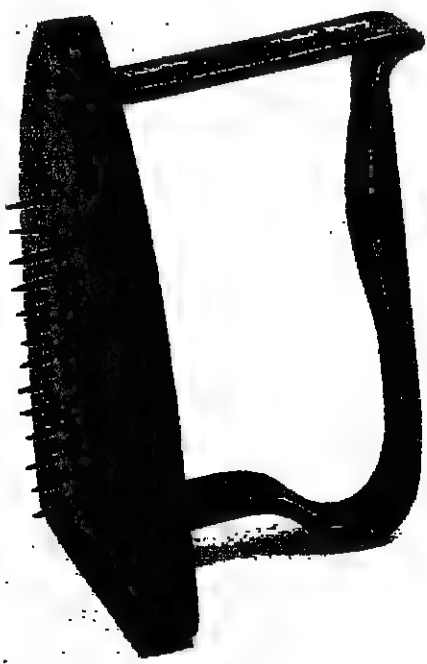
The evocative bedroom angst of *Alone in the Dark* opened the set, with Hiatt alone with his acoustic guitar, his deep, world-weary rasp sounding as if it swam all the way from the Mississippi. Thereafter, though, his band helped to keep the blues at arm's length, none more so than Immergluck, who may look like a roadie for a heavy metal band but whose dexterity on acoustic and electric guitars, mandolin and pedal steel was exceptional.

Indeed, the diversity of instrumentation complemented the variety of musical styles. If rhythm'n'blues is the core material of Hiatt's stylistic tapestry, it is also interwoven with the threads of folk, rock and country.

On top of that, the wry wit and gritty edge of Hiatt's lyrics are always apparent. The stirring ballad *Lipsick Sunset*, for example, strikes just the right balance between the bitter and the sweet.

Onstage, Hiatt is no morose, discontented — on the contrary, he seemed to be totally at ease with himself and genuinely thrilled with the hearty applause which unfurled, like a red carpet, all the way back to his dressing room.

NICK KELLY



TEN OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Richard Cork's daily guide to the Hayward Gallery's still lifes

■ MAN RAY: Gift, c. 1958 (replica of 1921 original)

EIGHT years before Man Ray made the first version of *Gift*, Marcel Duchamp decided that ready-made objects could become works of art. Man Ray agreed with this heretical proposition, and duly purchased an ordinary flatiron in 1921. But unlike his friend Duchamp, he could not leave it alone. The flatiron was painted, and inscribed with a title and signature on the handle. Above all, its base was violated with 13 tacks. Glued on head downwards, they jut menacingly from the iron's bottom. An instrument normally meant to smooth and enhance is transformed into a vicious weapon. The tacks stick out in a martial row, ready to attack, pierce and tear.

□ *Objects of Desire* opens at the Hayward (0171-960 4242) today, and is sponsored by BMW in association with The Times

TOMORROW: Joan Miró's *Table with Glove* (1921)

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AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

All dressed up and nowhere to go: Hardy Amies laments the evils of the catwalk in an overview of the fashionable male

Our good old friend *The Oxford English Dictionary* says that *fashion* "is conventional usage in dress, mode of life etc. especially as observed in the upper circles of society; conformity to this".

In the first five chapters of Colin McDowell's book there is an attempt to sketch in points of fashion in dress. *Les Incroyables* — 18th-century fops whose high collars nearly hid their faces — are allowed to have been of English style, as is Beau Brummell. Eventually, on page 63, we are presented with the perfect gentleman in the person of Lord Raffles in the year of 1902.

We are then treated to two pieces of information on tailoring and cutting cloth. And brought to a gasp by two pages on military style. The first, of course, is Tasso's painting of Capt. Burnaby in 1870. To balance this nonchalant elegance we have a grotesque photograph of someone called Jimi Hendrix in 1967.

But they are mere repeats of all histories of fashion. We see royalty dressed up in pictures we have all

Striving for style is never in vain

seen. The author is obviously obsessed with catwalk clothes. It would have been witty if he had noticed that the Henry VIII's and the Sun King's all dressed for the catwalk display at Court.

But catwalk shows are the enemy of good fashion. When I entered the London fashion trade in 1934, the leaders were Norman Hartnell and Victor Stiebel, joined a little later by the Irish-Parisian, Edward Molyneux. I was a junior. But I had a "house" model. All the serious houses had these. When milady asked to see the suits (coats and skirts, please) the house girls

THE MAN OF FASHION
Peacock Males and Perfect Gentlemen

By Colin McDowell
Thames & Hudson, £29.95
ISBN 0 500 01797

put down their knitting and gave the customer a private showing, with everything worn at the level of the floor of a private house. Catwalk shows give a totally strange view, a look upwards of some distance, totally alien to that of the life of the customer.



Swells and dandies: Cruikshank's satire of male vanity (1821)

We all know now that catwalk shows are only to advertise a name, which can be put on articles like handbags and lipsticks; nothing wrong in that. But one must be amazed when a whole look is ultimately devoted to the practice. My dress house in London is in its

book is surprisingly unfair on London's clothes today for men: English handmade suits are still among the finest in the world. The Italians, who have little sense of tradition, spend a lot of money advertising and staging catwalk shows. Their clothes are probably the best "factory-made" clothes in the world. But we English fell down when lighter-weight cloth became desired.

Mr McDowell speaks little of the suit. He fails to point out that within the lifespan of the modern suit design — now nearly 200 years — it is possible to have many totally correct variations. The suit shown on page 139 and attributed to the Italian Litrico is in fact the Scottish gillie suit worn by Prince Albert for shooting in Scotland.

I spent a lot of time in Venice in the Fifties, where it was wonderful to see the care the men took to appear clean-shaven, their clothes pressed. Also one saw at once that the "popo" — the bottom — was honoured and not just passed over quickly as it was by prudish English tailors. Colin McDowell praises the German Boss. So do I.

His well-made suits follow the rules of English tailoring as it was in 1660.

Colin McDowell makes no mention of manners: that it is very bad manners to appear for the first time as a guest in a house without a tie unless your hostess tells you to come "casual". Mr McDowell also overlooks how well-dressed workmen now are. The sun of this summer has produced some stunning torsos. Gone is gentility for both sexes. I can remember crossing sweepers in bowler hats.

The cover of the book is a warning. I cannot imagine where such an outfit could be worn. It is pure fancy dress — The Leopard Man. Does the book claim to record the clothes of these times? Will it be quoted in 50 years' time? Is it to guide the young and instruct the aged? It will go down in my view as the ugliest book on fashion published in this century.

Sir Hardy Amies's *The Englishman's Suit* is published by Quercus, priced £14; a German edition will be launched next month.

An artist on her own terms

The serious question raised by this biography of Vigée Lebrun is an aesthetic one: What makes a good painting?

Throughout her working life Louise Vigée Lebrun was famous. She was born in 1755 into a painter family of no great renown; her early talent was prodigious and by her twenties she had her salon and a growing number of wealthy clientele. For the next 60 years she painted the portraits of the titled and rich of Europe. Her pictures cost more than those of David, who did not like her but openly respected her work.

As a woman she was not allowed formal training. Male critics of her work complained that she could not draw. Nevertheless, she became the foremost portrait painter of her day and one of the four women admitted to the Académie. She learnt the mechanics of her trade from family and friends, and, as she admitted, from the marvellous supply of

social order she herself transgressed.

Were these contradictions muddled thinking or a straightforward selfishness, that needed wealth and power around her in order to make money of her own, or was it her instinct that the arts need stability in order to thrive?

Whatever the reason, her uncritical portrayals of the great and the good, her desire to flatter and please her sitters in paint, is used against her, then and now, by those who dislike her work or her. David called her "a servant of quality".

Michael Levey, in *Painting and Sculpture in France 1700-1789*, dismisses her. Angelica Goodden makes no wild claims for her subject. Hers is not the kind of history that revises neglect by rewriting the evidence. The facts themselves suggest we look again. If we say that Vigée Lebrun was simply fashionable at the time, do we mean that Post-Revolution France and Victorian England were not subject to fashion? Do Old Masters her husband, a dealer, bought and sold. It is possible she connived with him over a few fakes, including his discovery of a "lost" Vermeer.

Jeanette Winterson

THE SWEETNESS OF LIFE

A Biography of Elisabeth Louise Vigée Lebrun
By Angelica Goodden
André Deutsch, £19.99
ISBN 0 233 99216

While her husband enjoyed the high life, Louise insisted on simple tastes and an absolute commitment to her work. Simple tastes, so called, were fashionable at the time — Marie Antoinette playing at being a shepherdess, Madame du Barry in her muslin shift, all very Rousseau and Natural Man but backed by an extravagance that would soon trigger the Revolution.

If her simple tastes were learnt, her commitment to her work really was natural, though not in any sense that her beloved, but misogynistic, Rousseau would have recognised. When the Revolution divided Paris and exiled or executed most of her patrons, Louise set off for Italy, with her young daughter, with her paintbrushes but without her husband. Nothing would stop her work.

For the next 12 years she toured Europe, earning her own living, selling certain paintings for her husband (who divorced her while she was away), bringing up her child, and hoping always to be reunited here and there with those tatters of the *ancien régime* that revolution and Napoleon had thrown all over the world. Louise was that curious mixture, common in artists of all kinds, of radical personal behaviour and conservative politics. As a single parent and a working woman, succeeding outside the boundaries of her sex, she was unstuffy and freedom-loving. At the same time she remained a strict monarchist and a believer in the

attitude to it. It is ourselves we need to slit and weigh when we make our judgments. So often it is ourselves we are talking about, our bias, our fashions and not the painting or the book or the music at all.

So what do we see when we look at her pictures? They are virtuoso pieces. Some of them, like Countess Golovine, in the Barber Institute at Birmingham, are exceptional: they possess an energy and spirit which technique alone cannot counterfeit. They are worth looking at. She is worth knowing.

I blame the Romantics. The concept of genius, the man (and it is a man) unmatched, unrivalled, above all, original has conditioned our ideas about art and how to think about it since the 18th century. We are so preoccupied with genius that we no longer know how to give due to the large body of good work that has always been made and that is vital to culture. Modern criticism veers from the iconoclastic "we're all geniuses anyhow" to the fashionable cynicism of refusing status to anyone. Both doctrines are absurd. This clever and timely biography of Vigée Lebrun — who now has her own room in the Louvre — might make us pause long enough to forget the categories and enjoy the pictures.



A woman's direct gaze: Vigée Lebrun's portrait of Countess Varvara Nikolaevna Golovine

Time to put away childish things

Claire Messud

HERE ON EARTH

By Alice Hoffman
Chatto & Windus, £14.99
ISBN 0 7011 6692 4

HERE on Earth, Alice Hoffman's twelfth, takes as its setting a fictive New England hamlet called Jenkintown, a community still cohesive and remote, a place where memories are long and outsiders destined to remain the label. March, Murray, the novel's protagonist, has returned to her childhood home for the first time in 19 years.

Leaving her professor husband (also a refugee from Jenkintown) in California, her sullen teenage daughter, Gwen in tow, she plans to stay a week. She has come for the funeral of the housekeeper who raised her, and to sort through the artefacts of her youth.

But Jenkintown, for all its rusticity, harbours turbulent forces that threaten the stability of March's small family. There is her estranged brother, Alan, whose ruined life has left him a "drunken hermit" covering in the local marshes; there is his adolescent son, Hank, whom March has never met; and above all, there is Hollis, her first and abiding love, brought into the Murray home as a charity case when March was 11, his past and his origins a mystery, his character tempestuous. When March was 17, Hollis abandoned Jenkintown to seek his fortune, and she forgot him only after three years of waiting.

Hollis, now 42, has long since returned to the town in triumph as its wealthiest resident; but the source of his riches is shadowy and he remains a loner and an outsider, tacitly disliked. His only ally is Hank, whom he has raised; his one remaining desire, to reclaim March.

What ensues is inevitable from the outset: March and Hollis resume the course of their passion, while Gwen and Hank find solace together from the loneliness of adolescence.

The course of true love rarely runs smooth, and in this instance it runs amok: the darkness of the novel's vision is at odds with the cosiness of

Hoffman's storytelling, and March, like her brother before her, seems a character doomed to disaster.

Essentially a Gothic tale, *Here on Earth* is mirrored, part by its children's book prose ("on some crisp October afternoons the whole world smelled like pie"; "The dog's tail wags like mad against the Judge's overcoat"); and in part by its implausibility. Alice's extreme dissolution, Hollis



Hoffman: love run amok

inevitable menace, Gwen's complicity, March's lack of conscience and her husband's curious passivity — all provoke scepticism about the unfolding events.

The former flaw is responsible for the latter: readers will, after all, succumb eagerly to illusion if it is carefully constructed. But there is a complicity in Hoffman's narration, as if she doubted our intelligence or at the least, presumed our goodwill, and the result is an unshakeable aura of absurdity around March Murray's trials — and, in this reader, at least, a bland indifference to her fate.

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But as to gossip, La Stupenda won't sing

Claire Bloom

A PRIMA DONNA'S PROGRESS

The Autobiography of Joan Sutherland
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20
ISBN 0 297 61321 8



Sutherland: guarded

For the title of her autobiography, Joan Sutherland has chosen *Prima Donna's Progress*. A triumphant progression she certainly makes, across the stage of every great opera house in the world. The preparation for each great role she sang, the costumes she delighted in, the quality of the other singers, all is meticulously recorded. *La Stupenda* appears in all her stage glory.

Of the woman herself we learn very little. If there did exist moments of personal anguish along this primrose path, she keeps them strictly to herself. We, her readers in this age of wholesale confession and blood guilt, cannot help but feel dissatisfied.

The death of her father, when Sutherland was a child, could not have left her unscathed: "Death was something I soon had to cope with... for on my sixth birthday my father died, on returning from his morning swim... he had not been feeling too well... and mother had told him not to go down to the beach and face the climb back but I was anxious to try my new bathers so he decided to go."

He died in his wife's arms and, although Sutherland doesn't tell us this, it would appear this must have been in full sight of his young daughter. Although Sutherland confides "I remember the heartbreak still," she tells us little more of the impact this calamity must have had on the psyche of an intelligently alert young child. All we are told is "life goes on". So this gawky girl with the determined jaw set out on her inevitable path towards a brilliant career.

Sutherland was born with perfect vocal cords; she soon developed an innate love of music and was fortunate in having a gifted and supportive mother who recognised her daughter's talents, and knew how to nurture a young voice.

In the choice of her life partner, fate smiled again. Richard Bonynge was to become her coach, her musical mentor, her chief conductor, her husband... Their partnership will be remembered as one of the most fruitful and mutually supportive in musical history.

All this is related honestly and clearly; but for any further insight into the world she was to make her own, she is reticent. Although unfailingly appreciative of her colleagues, Sutherland gives no interesting details about individual performers. We are introduced to the young Plácido Domingo: "The role of Arturo was sung better. Luciano Pavarotti and I sang together... Richard had heard Luciano sing an audition in 1963 and suggested he be engaged... the rest is history."

In writing of the social sphere to which, as an international prima donna, she had access, Sutherland is equally reserved. "At the house of Noël Coward we met Charlie Chaplin and his wife Oona." (Neither incidentally, listed in the book's index, unlike the Duchess of Windsor, who is.) What did she make of them? Surely there must have been something she could tell us about meeting this extraordinary genius of film and his young and beautiful wife. No comment! "Had lunch at the Colony and met the Duchess of Windsor... we found the Duchess quite charming... we also admired the 'Duchess's' jewels."

One begins to wonder who could have edited this book: did no one trouble to beseech the author to give her readers a little more information? For opera buffs this must appear unnecessary quibbling. Sutherland's focus is, as many would wish, on the fact of her magnificent career.

Her tone becomes almost a litany: the evocations of roles that had to be learnt (She confesses to a poor memory),

recounting the minutiae of coaching sessions with her husband; recalling the dress rehearsals, the opening nights. She recalls, too, the headlines that greeted her performances: "The Songbird At Her Peak"; "Stupendous"; "Lucia London Triumph"; "A Norma To Join With The Legends".

La Stupenda takes open delight in her amazing reviews. She is winningly feminine, too, in the pleasure she takes in describing her extravagant stage costumes. We get a strong and complete sense of the immense joy and gratification she found in simply performing.

The *bel canto* repertoire, in which she excelled, had already been revived by her contemporary the incomparable Maria Callas. Throughout Sutherland's career she had to endure endless comparison with the other great artist of her era.

Callas: *La Divina*. The goddess of tragic opera. A voice ecstatic, full of sexual agony and passion which could touch the very soul of her audience. Callas was a great actress, a superb interpreter, but her vocal instrument sometimes failed to do the bidding of her emotional demands.

Sutherland: *La Stupenda*. A perfect instrument for music.

Her voice expressive, supple, secure, radiant. Sutherland was a prima donna *par excellence*. She was blessed with a strong constitution and jet lag, that spectre troubling most singers, seems to have affected Sutherland very little. Although she had her share of medical problems — sinus infections, agonising ear infections that left her temporarily deaf, a back condition that necessitated wearing an "uncomfortable" steel corset on stage — Sutherland very rarely had to cancel a performance.

Clearly a generous colleague, always indefatigably searching after vocal perfection, her career stretching over four decades, Sutherland will be remembered with Maria Callas as the last of the great prima donnas of the 20th century. As Maria Graham described her vision of a dancer, as "an athlete of God", so perhaps is the divine interpreter of song. When questioned about her private life, the actress Lillian Gish tersely replied that the artist's art. To anyone fortunate enough to have seen Dame Joan in her great roles — Lucia, Norma, Alcina — Gish's answer is clear. Readers expecting personal revelations, look elsewhere.

Try reading on the t

Slices from a



Caught spying

Michael Binyon finds two new books on the rise and fall of Britain's railways just the ticket for the enthusiastic trainspotter

Try reading on the train

In the three years 1845-47, at the height of railway mania, 425 new railway companies were incorporated in Britain, with a total proposed capital of £213,556,000. This was equal to two thirds of the value of all exports for 1846. By comparison, the value of gold held in the Bank of England in June that year was £16.6 million.

Men made fortunes overnight. Many more lost them — swindled by unscrupulous speculators who talked up the benefits of circuitous lines linking small towns that would never generate enough revenue, or caught up in pyramid schemes paying dividends of at least 10 per cent from capital, even as it was pouring in. Laissez faire, the enduring political credo of Victorian England, ruined any chance of a planned national rail network. Instead it was a case of first come, first served. The pioneering companies began with virtual monopolies, and quickly made money as goods and freight deserts the canals and turnpikes.

But with the nation won over by the marvels of steam locomotion, everyone wanted to join in the boom. All new construction involved the purchase of land, often in the teeth of opposition by the land-owning peers, and so an act of Parliament was needed for each line. The House was soon swamped with proposals, many quite impractical. And in 1848,

RAILWAYMEN, POLITICS AND MONEY

By Adrian Vaughan
John Murray, £25
ISBN 0 7195 5150 1
THE OXFORD COMPANION TO BRITISH RAILWAY HISTORY
Edited by Jack Simmons and Gordon Biddle
OUP, £45
ISBN 0 19 211697 5

while Europe erupted in revolution, Parliament spent most of its time arguing the merits of this or that harebrained rail project.

Adrian Vaughan has wonderfully brought to life the intrigues, swindles, and sharks of the period. He draws an unsympathetic portrait of George Stephenson: a visionary engineer, admittedly, and a dogged fighter for the right solution, but a rough, mean and unscrupulous man who antagonised many.

He has more time for Hackworth, the brilliant, but now forgotten, locomotive designer, or the upright Huiish, a pioneer of corporate management and one of the few honest men in railway management. The towering figure of the time was George Hudson, who raised huge sums and laid hundreds of miles of track through

outrageous daring, a bullying boorishness combined with vast stamina and tremendous power of organisation. Vaughan has a sneaking admiration for this Robert Maxwell of the railways: but when the crash came, ruining the stock market amid abject national contrition for reckless speculation, Hudson was the scapegoat. His shenanigans were exposed and he went into exile in Paris.

When railways began, they were far from safe. They were also insanitary, dirty and uncomfortable. Ruthless competition produced wide divergences: extraordinary luxury on some lines, bankruptcy on others. Vaughan is unsympathetic to the free-for-all, seeing ironic parallels with today's return to private railways. He traces, in encyclopaedic detail, overexpansion and bankruptcy that led to the inevitable amalgamations. But for the fascinating detail of how lines performed, the worst accidents, crime, construction, routes, tunnels, rolling stock, steam design and every aspect of railways — the most successful British industrial invention of all time — the *Oxford Companion* is invaluable. It is written with economy, clarity and encyclopaedic authority: the kind of book any enthusiast should have always at his side for constant reference and enjoyable dipping into.



Paddington Station during the General Strike, 1926. (From *Station to Station* by Steven Parissien published by Phaidon at £39.99)

Slices from a prime cut

History, according to John Major's friends, would always be kinder to the former Prime Minister than his colleagues were. This first authoritative, and authorised, account of Major's Premiership Clio, if that kind is at least understanding. It is difficult for any author to pass definitive judgement on the Major years while the wounds still gape, which is why Anthony Seldon does not try, but he does present a dispassionate inside account of a troubled administration which seeks to understand and empathise where others find it easy to condemn.

The Major years are destined to be remembered as a coda to the Thatcher decade, as a melancholy *Staying On* after the loss of *The Jewel in the Crown*, and it is against Mrs Thatcher's example that political leadership in Britain is now judged. At the last election both Tony Blair and John Major fought a war of succession to be acknowledged as her real son. Seldon shows that in one respect, at least, Blair was the true heir.

Mrs Thatcher made politics a crusade. For Tony Blair, too, there is a cross on his chest, a valour, and the enemy. John Major had no taste for revolution, no time for ideology. He protested in office that he was a practical politician whose mission was management. And that was his undoing.

Seldon reveals that Major came to office with no vision for Britain and never subsequently acquired one. On the night that he became Prime Minister he attempted to draw up a list of priorities rooted in



Thatcher's sons: Blair and Major, November 1994

Michael Gove

JOHN MAJOR

A Political Life

By Anthony Seldon

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20

ISBN 0 297 81607 1

childhood experience rather than guided by a philosophical compass.

Influenced by his family's downward mobility in his youth, he made his central ambition the reduction of inflation. As an aim it was, in itself, laudable but limited and in its inflexible pursuit the pound was kept in the straitjacket of the ERM until the humiliation of Black Wednesday.

Seldon's account of that day is gripping, pacy and revelatory. He employs anecdote, analysis and deft narrative control to excellent effect. Seldon's most significant discovery in his account is the news that Major overruled his

Chancellor at lunchtime on Black Wednesday to insist that interest rates rise from 12 to 15 per cent in a forlorn effort to stave off the inevitable ejection.

Major bowed to pressure from the Cabinet's pro-European big beasts, Michael Heseltine, Douglas Hurd and Kenneth Clarke, to go the extra kilometre for the sake of Europe even though the Treasury knew the only beneficiaries would be the speculators.

The other area where the child was the father of the man: the manifesto was Ireland. Seldon reveals that Irish neighbours gave the young Major an affection for the island which encouraged him to make peace a priority. Major, admirably, felt that there should no more be an acceptable level of violence in Ulster than in Surrey. Regrettably, he chose not to govern Ulster, like Surrey, as fully part of the United Kingdom in accordance with democratic principles.

Seldon provides a comprehensive and, at times, absorbing account of Major's attempts to bring peace to Northern Ireland. Unfortunately, as the collapse of the last IRA ceasefire showed, no amount of grit or honey can make a policy of reconciling irreconcilables work.

In Ireland, and elsewhere, a deliberate eschewal of a governing gameplan, in preference for painstaking work on the detail, marked the Major administration and it also, appropriately, characterises Seldon's book.

Every significant domestic player has been interviewed, and particular attention has been paid to the perspective of the adept Downing Street insiders such as Sarah Hogg, Christopher Meyer and Roderic Lyne. Skilled at process rather than driven by principle, calm *hommes d'affaires* rather than ideological *franc-tireurs*, they were men and women among whom Major felt comfortable and whom he came to impress.

Although Seldon honestly captures the social insecurity of the Boy from Brixton, which led him to detect personal slights in straightforward criticism, the author also succeeds in portraying a Prime Minister who, while no intellectual, was far more intelligent than his detractors maintained. Seldon's account will not convince those detractors, of whom this reviewer is one, who find fault with Major's instincts not his intellect, but as a sympathetic inside account of a decent man adrift, this life provides fascinating reading.

Erica Wagner remembers her favourites on National Poetry Day

Until it trips off the tongue

BY HEART

101 Poems to Remember

Edited and with an Introduction by Ted Hughes

Faber, £7.99

ISBN 0 571 02637 7

Memorisation. This discards the punishment of learning by rote in favour of the more ancient system of learning by image espoused by Cicero and Thomas Aquinas.

For each line of poetry, work out a picture in your head; link the pictures: let the rhythm do the rest. So: a cat and a hedgehog yowling at a harper, who escapes their cries by dancing round a cauldron. There is the witches' curse from *Macbeth*: "Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd./ Thrice and once the hedge-pig whin'd./ Harper cries: 'Tis time, 'tis time./ Round about

the cauldron go..." You're off.

All right, at first it seems a bit of a pain. You have to add your own creativity to that of the poet. But that, as Hughes points out, is just it: the memoriser's input fixes the image far more firmly than numbing repetition. Add to that the "physical momentum of inevitability", the rhythm of the verse, and you have an unbeatable combination. It is noticeable that where rhythm is subtle — Eliot's *La Figlia Che Piange* vs. F.R. Higgins's *Song for the Clatterbones* (which takes on Jezebel) — the task takes longer.

But to return: why undertake the task in the first place? Hughes's choice, if not his introduction, gives a hint. The same names appear again and again: Blake, Frost, Shakespeare, Eliot, Dickinson (is it worth mentioning that, but for Emily D. and one each from Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Stevie Smith — unless we

hold out hope for Anonymous — it is an almost entirely masculine collection? What the heck...). Here, yes, is *Jabberwocky*, but here for the most part is poetry that has become part of what is called the canon: and if you have ever wondered why this is so, try Hughes's method and you will learn.

There is a reason, I discovered, when I took to reciting Robert Frost through Shore-ditch, that such things are not learnt simply "by mind": Hughes's selection will work its way into your blood. And then you may find yourself branching out (or compiling your own selection, as publisher John Murray has in his *Old Chestnuts Warned Up*, John Murray, £9.95), returning to dusty volumes on your shelves, picking up new ones: try something from Paul Muldoon's anthology, *The Faber Book of Beasts*, £14.99 (plenty of images there) or the latest issue of *Index on Censorship*, *Banned Poetry* (£7.99) — spread the word by mouth.

Hughes's little volume is a reminder and a gift. Take his words to heart. And if I see you on the street, muttering under your breath, I promise not to think you mad.

Caught spying behind the curtain

DURING the Second World War the KGB began calling its most important British agents — all young Cambridge graduates recruited in the mid-1930s — "The Five". After the 1960 release of the popular Western, *The Magnificent Seven*, they became known as "The Magnificent Five".

The first of the five to be publicly identified were Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, who fled to Moscow in 1951. After Kim Philby defected in 1963, he was christened the "Third Man" by the media. Anthony Blunt similarly became known as the "Fourth Man" on being unmasked in 1979. The fifth and last to be named was John Cairncross, whose identity was discovered by Oleg Gordievsky, a British agent inside the KGB, and included in the history of the KGB "shed" in 1990.

For the *Mail on Sunday* featured a front-page inter-

Christopher Andrew

THE ENIGMA SPY

The Story of the Man Who Changed the Course of World War II

By John Cairncross

Century, £16.99

ISBN 0 7126 7894 0

view with Cairncross: "YES, I'M THE FIFTH MAN". Cairncross's posthumously published memoir repudiates the interview and denounces the description of him as the Fifth Man. Even his own, somewhat economical account however, confirms the KGB's judgment that he was one of the five leading British agents of his generation.

Of the five, only Cairncross served in the most important of the British wartime intelligence agencies, Bletchley

Park, which broke the German Enigma cipher and produced the now famous "Ultra" intelligence. Philby, by contrast, was turned down by Bletchley Park. By providing the KGB with "Ultra" intelligence on the Eastern Front, Cairncross became, by his own reckoning "the man who changed the course of World War Two".

Save for "changing the course of World War Two", Cairncross downplays his career as a Soviet agent. He claims that he was "trapped" into recruitment in 1937, though he accepted KGB money soon afterwards. After the war, he says that his contact with the KGB was "merely formal". His controller, Yuri Modin, insists that, on the contrary, he was "overjoyed by the quality" of Cairncross's postwar intelligence.

The most controversial part of Cairncross's career as a Soviet spy concerns his role as private secretary to Lord Hankey, one of Churchill's ministers, from 1940 to 1942. Hankey chaired the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), which discussed plans for the first atomic bomb. Cairncross admits that he "had no difficulty in having access to the secret papers in Hankey's office", and that from June 1941 he regularly passed some

of these papers to his KGB controller. Modin's memoirs say that Cairncross's documents included the first news of the Anglo-American decision to build the atomic bomb. Cairncross denies it. He



Cairncross: "Fifth Man"

claims that SAC minutes which show him as joint secretary are mistaken. Since, however, he had easy access to Hankey's SAC files, it makes little difference whether or not he served as secretary. On current evidence, Cairncross still appears the most likely source of the SAC material which reached Moscow.

The Enigma Spy sometimes reads like a textbook case of

psychological denial. Cairncross maintains that he has "nothing to regret". Yet the fact remains that in 1937, in the midst of Stalin's Terror, he misguidedly became the agent of an intelligence service which ran the biggest peace-time gulag in European history.

Cairncross casts around for scapegoats. Top of his list, for "exposing" him in 1990, are Gordievsky and myself, against whom he makes a series of inaccurate allegations. Both MIS and the KGB, he complains, have treated him outrageously.

Cairncross was no stage villain. But he does not quite merit the 1986 tribute by Graham Greene with which he begins his book, praising him as "a man of complete honesty on whose word I would absolutely rely". That was not the view of those colleagues whose papers he passed to Moscow or of the court which in 1982 found him guilty of smuggling currency across the Italian-Swiss border.

Christopher Andrew's most recent book is *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency* from Washington to Bush (HarperCollins, £9.99).

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Closing date: November 30 1997

Poems must be unpublished and a maximum of 40 lines on any subject.

All four prizewinning poems will be published in *The TLS* and will be displayed in Blackwell's Bookshops.

For an entry form and further details please send a s.a.e. to:
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Power to obtain waste regulation information

In re Green Environmental Industries Ltd and Another
Before Lord Justice Beldam, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Waller
[Judgment July 30]

Powers under section 71(2) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 enabled a waste regulation authority to obtain information from a person who was or might be a person to whom the provisions of the Act applied.

One main purpose of providing a waste regulation authority with the powers under section 71 must have been to enable it to collect information which would provide evidence in a criminal prosecution.

That that was what Parliament intended could be further deduced from the fact that under section 69 the offence for non-compliance was also "failure without reasonable excuse".

The court of appeal held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by Green Environmental Industries Ltd and Mr John Moynihan from the dismissal by the Queen's Bench Division of an application for judicial review of the grounds, inter alia, that the powers under section 71 could not lawfully be invoked for the purpose of conducting investigations into alleged criminal conduct.

Section 69 of the 1990 Act provided: "(1) An inspector may exercise any of the powers specified in subsection (3) below for the purpose of— (a) discharging any functions conferred or imposed on the secretary of state... or a waste regulation authority or on the inspector."

"(3) The powers of an inspector... are (a) at any reasonable time... to enter premises which he has reason to believe it is necessary for him to enter."

"(4) In exercising the powers conferred on an inspector by subsection (3) above, he shall be entitled to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to enable him to enter premises."

"(5) The powers conferred on an inspector by subsection (3) above shall be exercisable in relation to any premises which he has reason to believe it is necessary for him to enter."

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Solicitor need not pass on information

National Home Loans Corporation plc v Giffen Couch & Archer (a firm)
Before Lord Justice Leggatt, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Hobhouse
[Judgment June 18]

A solicitor, who acted for the borrower and the lender on a mortgage, was not under a duty to pass on to the lender information he discovered in respect of arrears on the borrower's mortgage account with his previous lender and of the threat of legal proceedings, unless instructed by the lender to do so.

The court of appeal held in a reserved judgment allowing the appeal of Giffen Couch & Archer, the defendant firm of solicitors, against the judgment of Mr Graeme Hamilton, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Queen's Bench Division (The Times, December 31, 1996).

He allowed a claim by the plaintiffs, National Home Loans Corporation plc, a centralised lender for residential mortgages, against the defendants, Giffen Couch & Archer, a firm of solicitors, who acted for the borrowers and the lender on a mortgage of a property, where the defendants acted for both the plaintiffs and the borrowers.

Mr Nicholas Davidson, QC and Miss Elizabeth Weaver for the defendants; Mr Daniel Serota, QC and Mr Peter Kirby for the plaintiffs.

LORD JUSTICE PETER GIBSON said that the plaintiffs, unlike high street banks and building societies, operated from a single location and depended on introductions of clients by intermediaries.

Part of their business came from mortgage transactions, such as when house owners with existing mortgages wished to take advantage of rising house prices to raise money by borrowing more on the security of their houses.

The plaintiffs operated a self-certification scheme, whereby the borrowers' word as to income and good conduct as mortgagors was accepted, a reference from the existing lender being no longer a prior requisite.

The plaintiffs were far from being alone among lenders in adopting such a scheme. Their scheme was the only one in which the plaintiffs sought to ensure that borrowers who sought a

Giving child case facts and findings to non-parties

In re L (Minors) (Sexual Abuse: Disclosure)
Before Mr Justice Bennett
[Judgment July 31]

In matters affecting children a judge sitting in chambers had power to control to whom and in what circumstances facts given in evidence and findings made by him should be given to persons or authorities to whom he was not party to the proceedings.

Mr Justice Bennett said he held in the Family Division when granting an application by a local authority that the address of a father, whom he had found earlier to have committed serious acts of sexual abuse against his children, should be disclosed to him, with leave for that information to be further disclosed to the local authority in whose area the father was then residing.

Mr David Beedfield and Miss Rebecca Brown for the local authority; Mr Allan Levy, QC and Mr Anthony Callaway for the father.

MR JUSTICE BENNETT said that while the potentially serious effect of such disclosure should be borne in mind, there was a strong public interest in ensuring that a local authority investigating a case of sexual abuse should be able to disclose that information to another local authority, in whose area the perpetrator was residing, specifically for the protection of children who might come into contact with him.

Furthermore, without such necessary information local authorities would be unable to carry out their statutory duties under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need within their area, and under section 47 of the 1989 Act, to make inquiries to enable them to decide whether it is necessary to protect a child at risk of suffering significant harm.

Repeating the content of the case of R v Chiswick and Others, the court held that the disclosure of such information to a local authority was not a breach of the father's right to privacy.

MR JUSTICE BENNETT said that while the potentially serious effect of such disclosure should be borne in mind, there was a strong public interest in ensuring that a local authority investigating a case of sexual abuse should be able to disclose that information to another local authority, in whose area the perpetrator was residing, specifically for the protection of children who might come into contact with him.

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Extra month for Patents Court

Practice Notice: Patents Court
With a view to making the operation of the Patents Court more expeditious and efficient, Mr Justice Laddie issued, in that court on October 1, the following directions:

1 In view of the current and expected workload of the Patents Court, the following modifications to the practice of the Court would be implemented:

2 As from next year, the Patents Court would sit in September. Initially, that extra month of sitting would be reserved for trials and applications with an estimated duration, taking into account any adjournments, of not more than 14 days or less.

3 Patent trials were fixed some months in advance. That had the effect of filling the bulk of the court's timetable. The court had taken to sitting at 10am on most days of the week to accommodate the large number of short applications. That practice would continue.

4 In addition to those arrangements, in future the court would make available a two-hour slot from 9am to 11am on Tuesday mornings, so as to speed up the hearing and disposal of slightly more lengthy applications.

5 Parties and their representatives would be expected to continue to assist the court to dispose of cases as efficiently as possible. In the case of any of the applications referred to in paragraphs 2 or 3 above, the parties had to provide to the court, by not later than 4pm on the preceding working day, all necessary documents and skeleton arguments. They should also provide drafts of any order which the court would be invited to make.

6 It was important for the court to be provided with accurate estimates of duration, so that, where possible, more than one application could be listed for hearing before 10.30am. Parties would be kept to their estimates and, where necessary, to achieve that, adjournments would be imposed on oral submissions.

Lord Justice Hobhouse and Lord Justice Leggatt agreed.

Solicitors: Mills & Reeve, Cambridge; Everheds, Cardiff.

MR JUSTICE BENNETT said that while the potentially serious effect of such disclosure should be borne in mind, there was a strong public interest in ensuring that a local authority investigating a case of sexual abuse should be able to disclose that information to another local authority, in whose area the perpetrator was residing, specifically for the protection of children who might come into contact with him.

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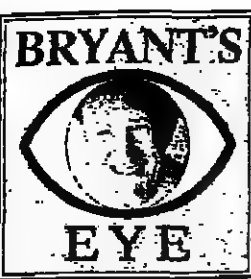
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Breathtaking Brazilians blended stamina with style

Things ain't what they used to be" is a constant refrain in sport. The heroes of the past are always bigger, stronger, fitter and faster, according to those nostalgic enthusiasts who still kick around in the cigarette card-land of their memories.

For them, Bradman would still be hitting his centuries today (and still without a helmet). Paavo Nurmi would still be lapping all-comers (including the squads of Kenyans) on the track, and Pelé would still be showing the world how to play football. But if you ask the players and coaches of today, they will tell you the truth is very different. They are quick to rubbish the training routines, playing techniques and fitness levels of the past as quaint and ineffective.



Sixties and could easily beat them 10-0. Nobody could prove that he was wrong, but George Best kicked back angrily, saying: "It's a total insult to hear what Schmeichel has said. I doubt if they could beat us by that margin even if they played against us today — Zinner frames and all."

Brazil of 1970?

One man brave enough to try is the sports physiologist and former international runner, Joe Dunbar. In the course of research for the Science of Sport exhibition at the Science Museum, he has come across some intriguing files containing physiological tests that were carried out on teams and players of the past.

As a result, he has come up with a remarkable assertion: that the 1970 Brazil football team — the team that defeated Italy 4-1 in the Aztec Stadium in Mexico City to win the World Cup — was not only the greatest team of that era, but may have been the best prepared and perhaps the fittest team of all time.

The fitness of footballers has long been a subject of study by Dunbar. He acts as a sports science consultant to two professional clubs and a number of Premiership players. In 1995 he presented a paper to the World Congress of Science and Football, com-



Pelé left Italy in awe during the 1970 World Cup final

paring levels of fitness among clubs in the Premiership, the former Endleigh League and the Vauxhall Conference.

When it came to looking at the data on Brazil, Dunbar said he was struck by the remarkably focused approach that they took to the World

40 metres (with a ten-metre rolling start), for speed endurance (using shuttle runs), for aerobic stamina (using the Cooper 12-minute test of distance covered), for strength and power (using a jump test) and for flexibility. In addition, their blood haemoglobin was regularly monitored.

Training sessions over the 16 weeks usually took place twice a day and included punishing circuit-training as well as football skills.

The fitness level of these players back in the 1970s was amazing and compares very favourably with many international players of today, Dunbar said, "particularly when it comes to stamina. It destroys the myth that Brazil were simply a more skilful side than anyone else. They were well-conditioned and perfectly prepared. You would have a tough time trying to replicate their regime today, particularly in Europe, because of the demands of club football."

The 1970 Brazil team included players who became household names the world over — Pelé, Jairzinho, Rivelino and Tostão — and their stamina as well as their style was very much on show during the final. At half-time Brazil and Italy were level at 1-1. But Italy collapsed as they ran out of steam and conceded three goals in the last half-hour.

When you see the records, in these tests, it makes you realise that they were doing things 20 or 30 years ago that we aren't doing today," Dunbar said. "To the best of my knowledge there is no controlled fitness monitoring of England's national squad — though they used to use Lillieshall as a testing centre."

sending off to play Italy this weekend."

Dunbar believes that the most significant factor in Brazil's preparation in 1970 was the 16 weeks that the squad spent in training camps. Shortly before they defeated England 4-0 in the tournament, a Brazilian coach sent out the message for the England manager: "We don't have the same problems as England in getting our players from their clubs. We simply take them," he said.

"Because of the World Cup most Brazilian clubs have been without their international stars for many months in the past year. To us the national team must always come first."

Twenty-seven years on the England coach, Glenn Hoddle, might think that little has changed. When it comes to preparing for a World Cup, we still have a long way to go to catch up with the past.

JOHN BRYANT

JUDO: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS BEGIN TODAY IN PARIS

Strongman Douillet carries French hopes

By JOHN GOODBODY

DAVID DOUILLET is one of the most dangerous unarmed men on earth. At 6ft 6ins and 205 lbs, he is slightly larger even than Olivier Merle, and could well be packing down alongside him in the second row of the France rugby team.

Today, Douillet, 28, defends his world heavyweight judo title on the opening day of the 1997 world championships at the Stade de Bercy, the biggest indoor arena in Paris.

The French are looking to Douillet, the Olympic champion, to begin these championships, in which 110 countries are participating, with a victory. Then, if he decides to enter, he could also win the Open category on Sunday, the division in which fighters of all sizes take part.

Judo is hugely popular in France, with 524,000 registered members of the national federation, third in size only to football and skiing. The championships this weekend have been sold out since May. The French tradition of savouring this

sport is matched only by nations of the Far East, particularly Japan, which invented it.

In 1961, at the Stade de Coubertin, Anton Geesink, the 19-stone Dutchman, became the first man to break Japan's domination, when he defeated their three representatives in succession to take the world title. It was the most significant moment in the sport's history and, the next day, the Kodokan, the headquarters of judo in Tokyo, had the atmosphere of a morgue. Few spoke and no one practised.

It was not until 1979 that Japan produced an apparently invincible heavyweight similar to Geesink, when, again in the Stade de Coubertin, Yasuhiro Yamashita won the first of four world titles.

Now the French have the chance to salute their own champion, a successor to Geesink and Yamashita, and it is an occasion compounded by the relief that Douillet is able to fight again at all after a serious motor accident a year ago.

Douillet, riding a motorbike, had collided with a car and suffered shoulder and calf injuries. He spent six weeks in plaster. "I was

simply happy to be living," Douillet said.

He was unable to compete again until May yet, curiously, the long period of recuperation appeared to revive his enthusiasm, which had flagged immediately after the Olympic Games in Atlanta last year.

"At 4 o'clock in the morning, a few hours after I had won the Olympic gold medal, I should have been the happiest of men, shouldn't I," he said. "But I was sitting on the edge of my bed, my head in my hands, wondering what more I could do in my life. The accident did me some good mentally."

Douillet — the word, inappropriately enough, means "soft" and "delicate" in French — has a firmness of resolve that has impressed Geesink. "It is always difficult to come back after missing several competitions, but Douillet is so good and so strong mentally that he should win another world title," Geesink said.

This is what the French are demanding. Douillet has the resolution and technical ability to fulfil the expectation.



Douillet, left, defends title today. Photograph: David Finch

Howey and Davies hoping for medals

GREAT Britain could scarcely have had a more vexing build-up to the world championships, in which their fighters will be attempting to recover their former distinction after failing to get any medals at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996 (John Goodbody writes).

Nicola Fairbrother, the 1993 world lightweight champion, has a damaged shoulder. Her place has been taken by Debbie Allan, who has moved up from the featherweight category in which she took a European bronze medal three years ago.

In the light-middleweight category, Cheryl Peel, who has been recovering from a knee injury, was dropped from the team after losing to the Welsh Open on Saturday.

Danny Kingston, the 1996 European lightweight champion, withdrew, blaming poor management for his decision. Kingston, from The Budokwai in London, said: "It is not the coach's fault but, at one stage, we were called to a squad session with one day's notice. I'm not prepared to go to a world championship, where I should get a medal, when I am not properly prepared."

Despite these absences there are plenty of fighters with sufficient pedigree to take medals. Kate



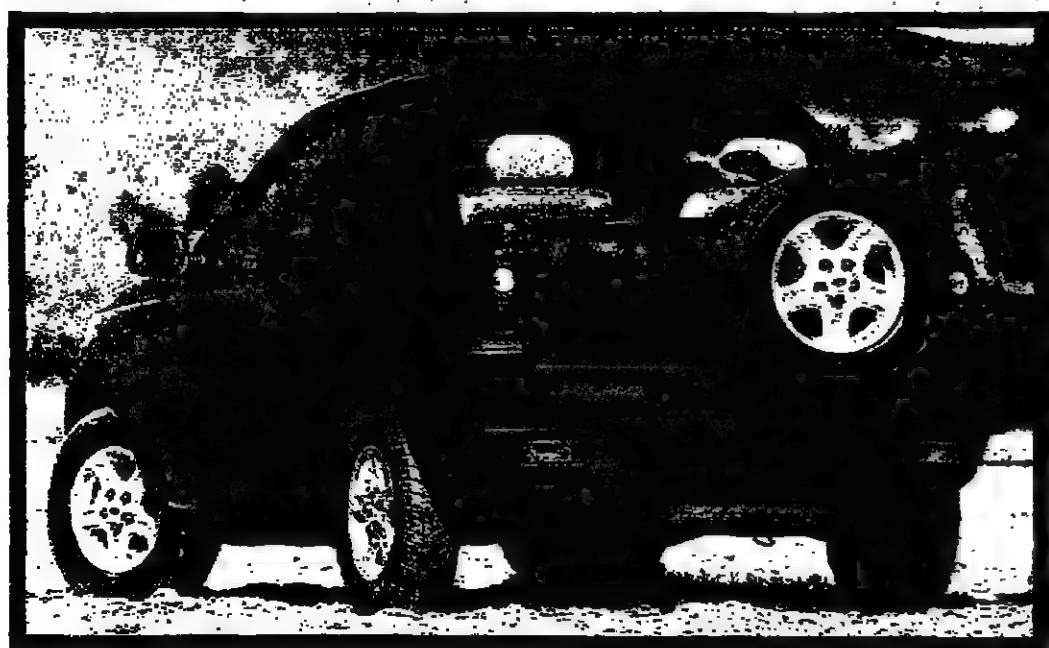
Howey: back to middleweight

Howey, from Andover, is back to middleweight, in which she won an Olympic bronze medal in 1992 after four years competing as a light-heavyweight. She won at the Tournoi de Paris last February, the most hazardous of all international competitions, except for the world championships and Olympics.

Julian Davies, the featherweight from Devizes, has an avowed style that has already brought him a European silver medal. In the women's heavyweights, Michelle Rogers, from Salford, is only 21 and has already shown promise.

A TIMES NEWSPAPERS PRIZE DRAW THE TIMES

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THE TIMES CHURCHILL INSURANCE PRIZE DRAW TOKEN 4

CHANGING TIMES

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This was a neat play by Tom Hanlon, playing for Ireland against Indonesia in the 1996 Olympiad. (In bridge, as in rugby, there is an all-Ireland team.)

Dealer South		Love all		IMPs	
♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7	♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7	♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7
♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4	♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4	♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4
♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5	♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5	♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5
♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2	♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2	♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2
♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7	♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7	♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7
♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4	♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4	♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4
♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5	♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5	♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5
♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2	♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2	♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2

W	E	W	E
♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7	♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7
♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4	♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4
♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5	♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5
♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2	♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2

Contract: Four Spades doubled, by South. Lead: Jack of hearts

East overtook the jack of hearts and switched to the king of clubs (ducked) and another club. Hanlon (South) won in dummy, crossed to the ace of spades and ruffed a heart. After another spade to the king and another heart ruff he was stuck in dummy with no obvious way to back to hand. This was the position:

W	E	W	E
♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7	♠ 10 8 6 5	♥ 7
♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4	♦ A K 9 7 4	♣ A 8 4
♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5	♠ 4 4	♥ 10 8 6 5
♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2	♦ Q J 10 6 5	♣ 8 5 2

See what happens if declarer plays a club from dummy.

WORLD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

PETROGENESIS

- An Armenian heresy
- The Stone Age
- Study of rocks

SABIR

- A type of tapir
- A short sword
- A French pidgin

SANCERRE

- A wild cherry
- A wine
- Without serif

PARSEME

- A strenuous
- Part of a signifier
- Parsley-trait

Answers on page 46

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Special K

Today's games reinforce the impression that the world championship should be between Garry Kasparov and Vladimir Kramnik. In classically timed tournament contests, the pair have three wins apiece and Kramnik clearly has no fear of the champion. These games show Kramnik exerting an iron grip over his opponents from which neither can escape satisfactorily.

White: Vladimir Kramnik

Black: Alexei Shirov

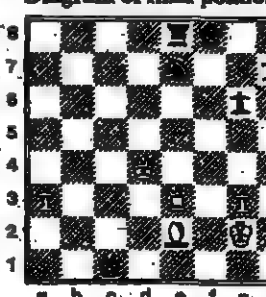
Tilburg, September 1997

King's Indian Defence

W	E	W	E
1 Nf3	Nf6	1 Nf3	Nf6
2 c4	c5	2 c4	c5
3 Nc3	Bc7	3 Nc3	Bc7
4 e4	d6	4 e4	d6
5 d4	0-0	5 d4	0-0
6 Be2	e5	6 Be2	e5
7 0-0	Nc6	7 0-0	Nc6
8 Qd2	Ne7	8 Qd2	Ne7
9 Bb1	Nb5	9 Bb1	Nb5
10 Re1	S	10 Re1	S
11 Ng5	Nf4	11 Ng5	Nf4
12 Bc4	exd4	12 Bc4	exd4
13 Rf1	Bf6	13 Rf1	Bf6
14 Nf5	Bxc3	14 Nf5	Bxc3
15 Qxc3	Bxc3	15 Qxc3	Bxc3
16 Rxc3	0-0	16 Rxc3	0-0
17 Bf1	e4	17 Bf1	e4
18 Ne3	Ne5	18 Ne3	Ne5
19 Rxc3	c6	19 Rxc3	c6
20 Qd2	d5	20 Qd2	d5
21 cxd5	cxd5	21 cxd5	cxd5
22 Qc4	Qc7	22 Qc4	Qc7
23 Qc5	Qd7	23 Qc5	Qd7
24 Rf3	Qg6	24 Rf3	Qg6
25 Rf7	Rf7	25 Rf7	Rf7
26 exf7+	Kx7	26 exf7+	Kx7
27 Qc7	Qd7	27 Qc7	Qd7
28 Rf3	Qd4	28 Rf3	Qd4
29 e3	Qd4	29 e3	Qd4
30 Qd7	Rd8	30 Qd7	Rd8
31 Qd7	d4	31 Qd7	d4
32 Bc4+	Kf8	32 Bc4+	Kf8
33 g3	Qd4	33 g3	Qd4
34 Be2	Qc8	34 Be2	Qc8
35 Qxd4	Qc1+	35 Qxd4	Qc1+
36 Kg2		36 Kg2	

Black resigns

Diagram of final position



White: Shakhmat

Black: Vladimir Kramnik

Tilburg, September 1997

Nimzo-Indian Defence

W	E	W	E
1 d4	Nf6	1 d4	Nf6
2 c4	e6	2 c4	e6
3 Nc3	Bc5	3 Nc3	Bc5
4 e3	0-0	4 e3	0-0
5 Ngf3	d5	5 Ngf3	d5
6 Qd2	Nxd5	6 Qd2	Nxd5
7 exd5	Nxd5	7 exd5	Nxd5
8 g3	Nxd5	8 g3	Nxd5
9 Nxd5	Bd6	9 Nxd5	Bd6
10 Qd3	Bd6	10 Qd3	Bd6
11 Bg2	Bd6	11 Bg2	Bd6
12 Bc3	exd5	12 Bc3	exd5
13 Qxd5	Qe7	13 Qxd5	Qe7
14 Rb1	Nc6	14 Rb1	Nc6
15 Qd3	Qe7	15 Qd3	Qe7
16 Qd5	Bd6	16 Qd5	Bd6
17 e4	Bd6	17 e4	Bd6
18 Rf1	Nc6	18 Rf1	Nc6
19 Rf1	Nc6	19 Rf1	Nc6
20 Bc3	g6	20 Bc3	g6
21 Qh4	Qd4	21 Qh4	Qd4
22 Qd4	Qd4	22 Qd4	Qd4
23 Bf3	Rd8	23 Bf3	Rd8
24 h3	Rd8	24 h3	Rd8
25 Rf1	Rd8	25 Rf1	Rd8
26 Rf8	Rd8	26 Rf8	Rd8
27 Kf2	Rd8	27 Kf2	Rd8
28 Kg2	Rd8	28 Kg2	Rd8
29 Rf3	Rd8	29 Rf3	Rd8
30 Rf2	Rd8	30 Rf2	Rd8
31 Rf3	Rd8	31 Rf3	Rd8
32 Rf2	Rd8	32 Rf2	Rd8
33 Rf3	Rd8	33 Rf3	Rd8
34 Rf2	Rd8	34 Rf2	Rd8
35 Rf1	Rd8	35 Rf1	Rd8
36 Rf2	Rd8	36 Rf2	Rd8

White resigns

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Buturin — Kozakov, Lvov 1996.

Here White broke through with a powerful sacrificial attack based on a number of neat tactical points. Can you work out his combination?

Solution on page 46

Ballesteros under fire from Woods

Time: Boardman back for time-trial

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WORLD MATCHPLAY

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WILL

GOLF

Ballesteros comes under fire from Woosnam

By JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

THE rain that interrupted the Ryder Cup two weeks ago was as much as is needed in golf for a while. Some people have not dried out properly yet. There is no requirement for more rain to disrupt the Toyota World Match Play Championship, which starts at Wentworth this morning.

Yet the signs are not good. The BBC closed-circuit transmission was calling it Wentworth yesterday, which was appropriate. Practically the only things that were moving were wind-blown leaves. Though a group of golf journalists enjoyed a busman's holiday by hacking their way around the delectable adjoining East course, the West course was damp and desolate.

This autumn classic, which has been played here every year since 1964, is often staged on a course that is dressed in the autumnal colours of russet and orange, colours that are heightened by shafts of occasional sun after the early morning fog has disappeared. It does not look as though it will be like that this year. "The golf course is going to play very, very long," Frank Nobilo said, coming in from a

FIRST ROUND

Seeded players first (winning in brackets)
0845 and 1300: J Parnevik (Swe, 8) v I Woosnam (GB)
Winner to play E Elia (SA, 1)
0900 and 1315: P Mickelson (US, 5) v F Nobilo (NZ)
Winner to play N Price (Zim, 4)
0915 and 1330: B Faxon (US, 6) v D Clarke (GB)
Winner to play C Montgomerie (GB, 3)
0930 and 1345: V Singh (Fiji, 7) v T Watanabe (Japan)
Winner to play S Eldington (Aus, 2)

downpour and shaking himself like a dog that has just been given a bath.

Ian Woosnam, speaking from the experience of competing in 11 World Match Play events and countless PGA championships at Wentworth, added: "It is unbelievably long, the longest I have ever seen it."

There are not many records in golf as good as Ernie Els's in this event. It has become a second home for the South African. Els has played nine matches, won them all and accumulated £500,000 at a rate of £1,634 per hole. All this largesse has come from a car manufacturer and Els does not drive a car back home.



Watanabe, of Japan, who plays Singh, of Fiji today, gets in some practice on the 11th fairway yesterday

Driving was on Woosnam's mind, from the tee rather than on the road. He did not drive well at Valderrama, indeed has not been driving very well for months, and needs to improve if he is to stand any chance against Jesper Parnevik, his Ryder Cup teammate, in the first match this morning.

"Seve [Ballesteros] obviously had his reasons why I didn't play [on the first day] but I don't know what they were," Woosnam said about his captain in Spain, with a touch of asperity. "I have one of the best records in four-balls and in foursomes I had a good record, too, and I took another rookie with me this time and won the match. If he had said to me I am not playing well, or asked me what my feelings were, I would have felt happier about it."

This is the first serious criticism of Ballesteros's captaincy methods that has been made public since the Ryder Cup. The mutters that were heard from those close to Darren Clarke and Thomas Bjorn when they were not selected for the first day's play and, allegedly, not told that they were not to be needed until after Ballesteros had notified the press, were, in the main, kept quiet.

Woosnam may yet have the chance to be captain. He has said that he would like the opportunity. But it is becoming clear that the key figures in the discussion about the captaincy for the 1999 match are prepared to wait until September next year before naming the captain.

There would be two advantages in this. The first is it relieves the chosen man from having two years' pressure and the other that it gives the committee the chance to get to work on Ballesteros and persuade him to reconsider his decision to stand down.



Montgomerie manages a smile despite the rain that interrupted his practice round at Wentworth yesterday

Teamwork sees Leeds firm home

By MEL WESS

WHEN the team from a Leeds firm of water-garden specialists set out on their round in the Northern England regional final of The Times MeesPierson Corporate Golf Challenge yesterday, they did so with the simple aim of enjoying their day. They did a good deal more than that — they won it in style.

Charles Brown and Peter Jepson, the owner of Derry Landscapes and Garden Design, made the 95-mile trip from their home town to Slaley Hall, deep in the Northumberland countryside, last year and finished seventh with their two teammates. They were both back for another try, joined this time by John Knott and Keith Tooley, and together they made a winning combination.

The low spot of the day for the Jepson and Knott two-ball came on the 1st, where they failed to score, but Jepson then scored 20 points in the next eight holes, including an eagle — drive, five-iron, five-foot putt — on the 4th. Knott birdied the hole, giving the team seven points for the hole.

The other pairing of Brown and Tooley had a patchy day. Tooley hit the ball well from tee to green but could not hole a putt, while Brown, a four-handicapper, was less than impressive off tee and fairway but holed putts from all over the place. None of the four beat 30 points; this was a triumph for teamwork.

Finally, a tale of two individual successes in this team event. Phil Swinney, of Skipton Building Society, won the award for the longest drive, his tee shot on the par-five 12th travelling 297 yards.



In normal circumstances, the feat would have given him the warmest of warm glows, but, on this occasion, he was outshone by Dave Charlton, one of his team-mates. Charlton, a 16-handicapper, had the first hole in one of his 18-year golf career. He did it on the 185-yard 6th with a five-wood, and he did not see it for himself. From the tee he could not see the bottom of the pin, which Phil Posnett, the tournament director, had placed behind a bunker with more

than his usual sadism, and had to be told that the ball had gone in the hole.

When last seen, Charlton was struggling with the conflicting emotions of delight and impending doom. Every golfer and his bank manager knows that scores of holes in one are expected to buy drinks all round; Charlton did his duty. If he had scored a hole in one at the 14th, there was a car on offer. As it was, he had to be content with a large chunk of Watford Crystal.

RESULTS: 77: Derry Landscapes & Garden Design 78: John-Henry Clark Ltd 74: Weatherall Green & Smith 73: Allied Dunbar (Irish), 72: Clancy Medical Investment Group Ltd 70: B & K (Leeds) Ltd 69: Doncaster Rugby Football Club 68: Brydon International Hill Landscaping 67: C S S Insurance-Pleasure Residential Yorkshire Bank 66: Independent Agriculture Ltd 65: Hammonds Estates 64: Harrogate Building Society 63: APAC Development 62: Harrogate Building Society 61: Nuclear Electric 60: (Yokai) 59: 58:50 Financial Services Ltd 57: Financial Management Bureau Ltd 56: The Crossroads Group 55: British Midland, Forbo-CP Ltd

BOXING

Confident Badillo a threat to Hamed

JOSE BADILLO arrived in Sheffield yesterday in confident mood for his World Boxing Organisation featherweight title challenge against Naseem Hamed on Saturday. "I am the better fighter and I will win," he said.

The 26-year-old Puerto Rican is a late replacement for Victor Llerenas of Colombia, and boasts a professional record of 20 wins from 21 bouts. Although his claim to have won all 62 of his amateur contests is debatable, Badillo is an opponent whom Frank Warren, Hamed's promoter, has sought for a long time and promises to pose Hamed some overdue problems.

Badillo knocked down Tom Johnson, the former International Boxing Federation champion, three times on his way to a split-decision defeat in December 1995. Naseem could not manage in February this year — and being handed this contest at such short notice does not worry the Puerto Rican.

Speaking through an interpreter, Badillo said: "My last fight fell through two weeks ago, so I've been training all the time. Naz is an excellent fighter, but on Saturday he will have many problems. I've seen him fight before, but he has never been in the ring with someone like myself."

Badillo oozed confidence at the press conference, opting not to elaborate on any answers when one would do. Yes, he did want to unify the featherweight belts, Hamed's weakness was his chin and his own strengths were his hands and his heart.

At 5ft 6in, Badillo has a three-inch advantage over Hamed and feels that this will be one of his main weapons. Despite Hamed's list of easy contests, Badillo's record suggests that he will not go the same way as Juan Cabrera and Billy Hardy, who were defeated inside two rounds.

The bill has been finalised, with Johnny Nelson defending his European cruiserweight title against Dirk Wallyn, of Belgium.

CYCLING: WORST PROFESSIONAL SEASON LEADS TO CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE

Tired Boardman looks to luck for time-trial victory

FROM JEREMY WHITTLE IN SAN SEBASTIAN

CHRIS BOARDMAN'S effort to salvage rare success from what he describes as his most disappointing professional season climaxes this afternoon here in Spain when he attempts to win the world time-trial championship for the second time in his career.

Boardman, 29, winner of the elite event in 1994, will face strong opposition from the defending title-holder and recent Tour of Spain winner, Joxe Zülle, of Switzerland.

While the mainly flat 42.6-kilometre course is well suited to Boardman's strengths

against the clock, a succession of injuries and poor recent form have left him lacking

confidence in what is his preferred discipline.

"It's been a long season, and I'm tired," he said as he put the finishing touches to his preparation. "I'll need a bit of luck to win; Zülle starts as the favourite even though I'd say he's not as quick as he was this time last year."

The Merseysider began the Tour of Spain in September as one of Zülle's main rivals but dropped out of the three-week event after less than one week's racing, a failure he puts down to the fatigue of a nine-month season.

"Every year there are more races and more pressure," Boardman said. "I'd prefer to

race a seven-month season of quality race days, rather than nine months of peaks and troughs."

A series of physical problems during the summer, including a back injury that forced him to abandon the Tour de France, led Boardman to race for only 70 of the scheduled 110 days that he and his trainer, Peter Keen, had programmed for the season.

"This year I bit off more than I could chew," he said. "When I got injured I simply wasn't robust enough to come back to good form."

"Starting the Tour of Spain was a mistake, but it had been one of my objectives and I was reluctant to give it up, especially after stopping at the Tour de France."

But, while injury has played its part in his poor results, criticism of his reluctance to improve and his conservative "pre-programmed" racing style has increased on the European circuit.

"To a degree, I agree with what people say," he said. "I am scared of taking risks but I've also had the pressure of being team leader when maybe I shouldn't have been — perhaps part of that is the team's fault."

"At 29, I've realised that I'm no longer one of the new boys and that I'm now well established. I've been a professional for four years, so I'm no longer on a learning curve and it's time to look at things in a different way."

Chief among those reassessed objectives will be his hopes for the Tour de France, the European season's greatest prize but a gruelling test that Boardman has finished only once in four attempts.

"I haven't shown the progression in the Tour that I'd hoped for," he said. "I've had indications that I could progress but maybe it's time to stop trying to make it happen, to stop making myself unhappy. I've been thinking this way for about a year and I'm at the point where I almost have to admit to failure, which is not easy for me."

Boardman will stay with his French sponsor, GAN, until next August and then switch to Credit Agricole, the French high street bank.

Longo wins her twelfth world title

JEANNIE Longo-Ciprelli, of France, claimed her twelfth world title yesterday, when she successfully defended her women's individual time-trial crown at the world cycling championships in San Sebastian, Spain.

Longo, who had won the event the previous two years in Duisburg, Colombia, and Lugano, Switzerland, completed the 17-mile course in 39min 15.25sec, 0.85sec ahead of Zoufka Zabrava, of Russia. Third was Judith Arndt, of Germany, who finished 29.69sec behind Longo and 10.00sec ahead of Hanka Kupfernagel, her compatriot.

Longo's victory, although expected, was dramatic. She caught one of the favourites,



Longo: dramatic finale

Alessandra Cappelletto, of Italy, on the final lap, then barely overcame Zabrava at the finish. Longo, 38, averaged 42.99kph in the race.

Longo, who has said that she will retire from top-class cycling after these championships, has been recovering from a fall in which she broke her collar-bone. "I never thought I would make it to the world championships," she said. "In two months I've gone from hell to heaven."

She won her first world title in 1985, but has collected only one gold medal in four Olympics, winning the road race in Atlanta last year. She lost to Zabrava in the time-trial in Atlanta.

Last year's runner-up, Catherine Marsal, of France, finished sixth in 40min 23sec while the bronze medal-winner in Lugano, Alessandra Cappelletto, of Italy, was a disappointing tenth in 40.46.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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LEGAL NOTICES

AL RAZZOORNI LIMITED has been appointed as the Liquidator of the above-named company pursuant to the provisions of the Insolvency Act 1986. The Liquidator's office is at 15, The Quadrant, London, EC4A 3DF. The Liquidator's duties are to collect and realise the assets of the company, to distribute the proceeds to the creditors and to prepare a final account of the company's affairs.

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SCOTTISH AMICABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY

NOTICE is hereby given that on 24th September 1997 the Court of Session pronounced an Order under Section 49 of, and Part 1 of Schedule 2C ("Schedule 2C") to, the Insurance Companies Act 1982:

- sanctioning a Scheme ("the Scheme") under which the whole of the long term business of Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Society ("the Society") is transferred to The Prudential Assurance Company Limited ("Prudential") with effect from 11.59 pm on 30 September 1997 ("the Effective Date");
- transferring to Prudential the whole of the undertaking and of the property and liabilities of the Society with effect from the Effective Date as provided for in the Scheme, such Order not to become effective in respect of any Residual Assets and Residual Liabilities (as defined in the Scheme) until the relevant Subsequent Transfer Date (as defined in the Scheme);
- for the continuation by or against Prudential of any legal proceedings pending by or against the Society on the Effective Date, except that in the case of any such legal proceedings relating to any Residual Asset or Residual Liability the Order shall not become effective until the relevant Subsequent Transfer Date;
- allowing the Society to apply to the Court in terms of paragraph 5(1)(e) of Schedule 2C for any Orders in relation to such incidental, consequential and supplementary matters as are necessary to secure that the Scheme shall be fully and effectively carried out; and
- appointing the Society in terms of paragraph 5(5) of Schedule 2C to deposit two certified copies of the Order pronounced with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

Copies of the Order sanctioning the Scheme and of any other Orders made under paragraph (d) above are available on application to the agents mentioned below.

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'If I was experienced, I would have kept my mouth shut. Now people blow it out of all proportion'

Campbell learns hard lesson from Zola's finishing school

Matt Dickinson meets the England defender who was left to regret his honest admission at Wembley

In a week of bullishness and breast-beating by England's footballers, one sobering image refuses to fade. It is of a darting, diagonal run, the flash of a right boot and a diminutive Italian striker sprinting across the Wembley pitch with an "old-school grin" spread wide across his face. Behind him, an England defender appears bewildered. Caught out by one moment of quick-thinking, and even quicker actions, Sol Campbell remains rooted to the spot. A painful lesson learnt, it is fair to say that the Tottenham Hotspur centre half has not stood still since.

That Gianfranco Zola goal in February taught Campbell two essentials of international football. The first was the perils inherent in giving a world-class striker a split-second headstart. The second was never to own up to mistakes. While Glenn Hoddle, the coach, refused to accept the blame for his controversial selection of Matthew Le Tissier against the Italians, and Alan Shearer, the captain, largely escaped criticism for his least effective performance in an England shirt, Campbell put his head on the block. It was his second act of naivety that night.

"It was a whole-team situation, not just one person to blame, but being young, I admitted my mistake," he said. "When you are young, you take things to heart, you think it must be your fault. If I was a bit more experienced, I would have kept my mouth shut, because now people blow it out of all proportion."

"I think people are making too much of that goal. The game finished 1-0 because of it, but we could quite easily have got an equaliser. It was a very hard-hitting lesson but that game made me. It woke me up. I believe I have proved things since then."

Indeed he has. It should be remembered that Campbell was just 22, and winning only his second cap, when Zola gave him a rude introduction to the higher demands of the international game. Moreover, the Tottenham defender was in an unfamiliar position, at the centre of a back three completed by Gary Neville and Stuart Pearce, with the inexperienced Ian Walker behind them. There were others to blame — not least Shearer and Pearce — as Costacurta's long ball flew into Zola's stride, a fact that Hoddle was keen to point out this week.

Zola and Campbell have not crossed swords since then, but the England man believes he will present an altogether different challenge this time around. He will step out on Saturday confident that his performances since, particularly the outstanding displays in the Tournoi de France last summer, have elevated him from a promising but raw youngster into a player whose stature can match his giant physique.

His strength of body, fuelled by an enormous diet that is the

subject of much mirth in the England party, has never been in doubt, and nor has his strength of purpose. His distribution could be improved, but, now that Campbell, who so often appears to be the only man standing between Tottenham and defeat, believes that he has brought essential know-how to his game, Zola may have to find some new tricks.

"I have learnt a lot more playing in internationals and against the foreigners in the Premiership," Campbell said. "They are tricky customers but you learn their runs and their movements. They like to see your body shape and turn you. It is up to you to learn to do the opposite."

It is like an exam every week now in the league, but that can only help you. It means you are not going to get such a massive shock when you come against them in internationals. Your mind is in tune with their movements and you learn to anticipate things."

He is determined to expunge memories of that traumatic night. "You certainly can't keep worrying about mistakes and I won't be thinking back to that goal. We are in a good position. We have got to be positive. So long as we believe we can do it, that is the main thing. Everything is under control at the moment and I am

sure we will be shielded from all the hype out in Rome. You need nerves, though. They keep you on your toes, on the edge."

With Italy needing to secure victory, Campbell knows this exam will be his toughest to date, but there is an all-pervasive feeling around the England party that they could not be better prepared. It is a feeling reflected by many of the younger players in the England party, particularly the Old Trafford contingent.

David Beckham was another who failed to impose himself on that first encounter, but not even the effects of a troublesome cold will dampen the exuberance of the Manchester United midfielder player who will enter the Olympic Stadium fuelled by adrenalin rather than fear after his club's breathtaking victory over Juventus, the Serie A champions and European Cup finalists.

"There was an air of confidence before the Juventus game in the dressing-room," Beckham, who has yet to score in ten matches for his country, said. "You can just tell when everyone is feeling good. We were really hyped up and it carried us through, even after conceding that early goal. I am sure it will be the same in the England dressing-room on Saturday."

"The Juventus game is totally different, but it has helped psychologically. Everyone keeps talking about this being the biggest game in English football for years, but we are ready for it now. I would happily play the game today. I just want to get on with it."



Route-master: Campbell will be hoping to guide England safely through their Roman adventure

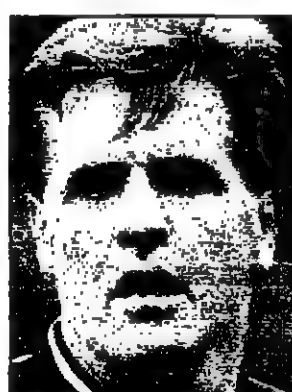
Money for Wembley redesign

By Russell Kempson

MOST of English football's thoughts this week have been concentrated on the Olympic Stadium in Rome, but, yesterday, Wembley Stadium also took its turn in the spotlight. The English Sports Council (ESC) released £21.5 million towards the reconstruction of Wembley, which it is hoped will help England to secure the rights to stage the 2006 World Cup and perhaps a future Olympic Games.

Wembley will close in the summer of 1999 and not reopen until 2002, when it will have been transformed into the state-of-the-art English National Stadium. Only its world-renowned twin towers will be retained from the old shell.

The ESC's money is the first tranche of the £120 million award, which was made in December last year, to the English National Stadium Trust (ENST). It will go towards the design stage of the redevelopment, with submissions already being invited from teams of architects.



Molby: parting swipe

the ENST, said: "We're extremely excited that we can now go ahead at full pace. The new stadium will pave the way for London and Britain to host other great sporting events."

Jan Molby, the former Denmark and Liverpool midfielder player, is likely to take a break from management after being dismissed by Swansea City, the Nationwide League third division club. Molby, 34, who became player-manager at the Vetch Field in February last year, wants to concentrate on

playing. "I was at the top level for 14 years and it was a big step down coming to Swansea," he said yesterday. "I found it quite difficult and it's put me off being a manager for a while. But I'd like to carry on playing and I've already had a couple of phone calls."

Molby, who took the club to the third division play-off final at Wembley last season, could not resist a parting swipe at the club's new owners, Silver Shield Group. "I get the feeling they want a man they can manipulate, who will do as he is told," he said. "I was not their choice and I don't think they wanted me here from the start." Mick Adams, the former Fulham manager, is favourite to succeed Molby. Paolo Di Canio, the Sheffield Wednesday striker, has been charged by the Football Association with bringing the game into disrepute. Di Canio, who has asked for a personal hearing, denied his personal involvement in relation to scoring a goal in the 1-1 draw away to Wimbledon in August.

Slaven Bilic, the Croatia and Everton defender, faces

the same charge for remarks allegedly made to Graham Poll, the referee, after he had been sent off in the game against Newcastle United last month. John Gregory, the Wycombe Wanderers manager, and Richard Hill, his assistant, have also been charged with misconduct for comments made to Steve Bennett, the referee of their match against Preston North End on September 27.

Portsmouth and Peterborough United have each been fined £12,500, with £10,000 of it suspended until June 1 next year, after being found guilty of failing to control their players during the Coca-Cola Cup first-round, first-leg tie at Fratton Park in August. A brawl broke out after Mark Tyler, the Peterborough goalkeeper, had been fooled by Hamilton Thorp, the Australian forward.

Coventry City, of the FA Carling Premiership, have announced a record loss of £10 million for the year ending in May. Although turnover increased by £3 million to £12 million, wages went up 45 per cent to £8.5 million.

No divided loyalties for Scimeca

RICCARDO SCIMECA, the England Under-21 captain, can count on the support of his father, Benito, in their European championship qualifying match in Rieti tomorrow — even though he is the owner of an Italian restaurant.

Benito, who was born in Sicily, will lead a mass exodus of the Scimeca family from the La Caverna restaurant in Birmingham to head for Italy for the group two encounter. But any feelings of support for their country will be put to one side for 90 minutes as they back their son, a central defender with Aston Villa.

It is a game that England must win — even though they are assured of heading their section — to boost their chances of automatic qualification as group winners.

Scimeca, who continues as captain, said: "My father, mother, uncle and two brothers will come to watch me, but a few will be left behind to run the family restaurant."

Goram loses fitness battle

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

ANDY GORAM, the Rangers goalkeeper, has been ruled out of Scotland's World Cup qualifying match against Latvia on Saturday. Alan Main, the St Johnstone goalkeeper, has been called up as understudy to Jim Leighton.

Leighton kept the No 1 jersey against Belarus last month when Goram's form had suggested that he might be recalled. Goram missed Rangers' match with Hibernian last Saturday but he reported to Hampden Park yesterday, when the Scotland squad assembled for the group four match. However, it was just a brief visit as he informed Craig Brown, the manager, that he was unfit to play.

Goram's knee injury is the latest setback for a goalkeeper whose career has been dogged by injury. For Main, however, is the chance to link up with the national squad for the first time. Brown also has injury doubts over Billy McKinlay, the Blackburn Rovers midfielder player, and Ally McColist, whose hamstring is suspect.



Goram: injured

Keith Gillespie is one of three more players who have withdrawn from the Northern Ireland squad for their World Cup qualifying match in Portugal. The Newcastle United winger pulled out of the party for the group nine match in Lisbon on Saturday after he failed a fitness test on his groin yesterday afternoon.

Bryan Hamilton, the manager, said: "Keith has a problem with his groin; the doctor and the physio had a look at him and we decided to send him back to his club."

The other absentees are Pat McGibbon, the Wigan Athletic centre half, and Iain Jenkins, the Chester City full back, who was only called into the squad yesterday as a replacement for Danny Griffin. McGibbon has a knee problem, while Jenkins hurt his ankle on Saturday.

Hamilton is also without Phil Gray, who withdrew on Monday with an ankle injury, and Tommy Wright, the goalkeeper, who pulled out on Tuesday with a recurrence of his thigh complaint.

Reinforcements for Northern Ireland have come in the shape of Aaron Hughes, the young Newcastle centre half, Peter Kennedy, the Watford midfielder player, and George O'Boyle, the St Johnstone forward.

Paul McCay, the former Celtic midfielder player, has been given a new job by the Scottish Professional Footballers' Association. McCay will have special responsibility for youth and education.

Injury rules Symons out for Wales

KIT SYMONS has lost his battle to join the Wales squad for the World Cup qualifying match with Belgium on Saturday. The Manchester City captain pulled out hours before Bobby Gould's squad left Heathrow, having failed to recover from a knee injury.

The defender had not joined the squad at their Slough headquarters for training this week, staying in Manchester for treatment.

Gould said: "It was always going to be a long shot, but it was best he stayed at Maine Road for intensive treatment. He has had to admit defeat."

Symons was injured in City's 1-0 defeat at Ipswich Town on Saturday, and was unable to play in Paul Lane's testimonial the next day. His injury has been diagnosed as medial ligament problems, and he could miss City's next match, on Saturday week.

Adrian Williams, the Wolverhampton Wanderers centre half, however, travel with the Wales squad and will have treatment on his Achilles problem.

Gould said: "He will have treatment morning, noon and night. But, if it is clearly not going to be right, he will then be sent back to Wolves before the match."

Gould is now short of central defenders and desperately needs Williams to be involved this weekend. With Gary Speed, his captain and sweeper, suspended, the Wales manager has only Robert Page and Karl Ready in the heart of defence.

Before flying out to Belgium, Gould and his squad attended the Welsh Footballer of the Year awards in Cardiff, where Mark Hughes won the top award.

Recalls for O'Brien and Coyne

TOMMY COYNE, the Motherwell striker, and Liam O'Brien, the Tranmere Rovers midfielder player, have been recalled to the Ireland squad for the group eight World Cup qualifying match against Romania at Lansdowne Road, Dublin, on Saturday.

Mick McCarthy, the Ireland coach, said that Coyne, 34, who has scored eight goals in seven Bell's Scottish League premier division matches this season, may partner Tony Casciaro up front.

"Tommy has been scoring goals for his club and that's good enough for me. He has plenty of experience and that's good with so many young players in our squad," McCarthy said.

O'Brien is expected to have recovered from a leg injury that caused him to miss the Nationwide League first division match against Norwich City last Saturday, which Tranmere won 2-0.

Ireland are almost certain to qualify for the World Cup play-offs and McCarthy said that he may not risk some of the nine players in his squad who have received yellow cards in previous matches.

"They will definitely be needed for the first play-off game at the end of the month," he said.

This could mean recalls for Alan Kelly, the Sheffield United goalkeeper, Curtis Fleming, the Middlesbrough defender, Ray Houghton, the Reading midfielder player, and Phil Babb, Jason McAteer, and Mark Kennedy, of Liverpool.

Stephen Carr, of Tottenham Hotspur, Lee Carsley, of Derby County, and Michael Evans, of Southampton, are under consideration to make their international debuts.

THE TIMES DILLONS FORUM

An evening with Kevin Keegan

TIMES readers are invited to a Times/Dillons forum on Thursday October 16 in London with Kevin Keegan, the former manager of Newcastle United. Keegan, who was also an England international footballer, will be the star speaker on a panel which will include Oliver Holt, football correspondent of The Times, among the topics for discussion are details of Keegan's sudden departure from Newcastle last season, his views on modern management, his return to football with Fulham and England's World Cup prospects.

The forum marks the publication of Keegan's *My Autobiography* (Little Brown £16.99) and will be held at Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London SW1 at 7.30pm. Admission price is £10 (concessions £7.50) and includes £2 off the price of the book. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to put questions to him.

THE TIMES/DILLONS FORUM

Please send me _____ tickets at £10 each (£7.50 concessions) for The Times/Dillons Forum with Kevin Keegan at 7.30pm on Thursday, October 16, at Westminster Central Hall, London SW1.

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NATIONAL LEAGUE: Florida 5, Arizona 3 (Florida leads best-of-seven series 1-0).

BASKETBALL

EUROPEAN CUP: Group E: London Towers 67 (Austin 17, Lewis 14, Durrant 12), Cottbus 52 (Horned 14, 12, McMahon 18, Sefu 10, Doros 14, Durrant 15).

CYCLING

IAN SEBASTIAN, Spain: World champion, Men's Under-25 time trial (25km). 1. F. Molteni (It) 40min 41sec; 2. L. Bodrogi (Hun) 41min 10sec; 3. D. G. G. (Bel) 41min 15sec; 4. R. Belderbout (Bel) 41min 16sec; 5. G. G. (Bel) 41min 17sec; 6. J. J. (Bel) 41min 18sec; 7. J. J. (Bel) 41min 19sec; 8. J. J. (Bel) 41min 20sec; 9. J. J. (Bel) 41min 21sec; 10. J. J. (Bel) 41min 22sec.

FOOTBALL

Tuesday's late results
VALDARVA CONFERENCE: Championship: 1. Swansea 2. Wrexham 3. Wrexham 4. Wrexham 5. Wrexham 6. Wrexham 7. Wrexham 8. Wrexham 9. Wrexham 10. Wrexham 11. Wrexham 12. Wrexham 13. Wrexham 14. Wrexham 15. Wrexham 16. Wrexham 17. Wrexham 18. Wrexham 19. Wrexham 20. Wrexham 21. Wrexham 22. Wrexham 23. Wrexham 24. Wrexham 25. Wrexham 26. Wrexham 27. Wrexham 28. Wrexham 29. Wrexham 30. Wrexham 31. Wrexham 32. Wrexham 33. Wrexham 34. Wrexham 35. Wrexham 36. Wrexham 37. Wrexham 38. Wrexham 39. Wrexham 40. Wrexham 41. Wrexham 42. Wrexham 43. Wrexham 44. Wrexham 45. Wrexham 46. Wrexham 47. Wrexham 48. Wrexham 49. Wrexham 50. Wrexham 51. Wrexham 52. Wrexham 53. Wrexham 54. Wrexham 55. Wrexham 56. Wrexham 57. Wrexham 58. Wrexham 59. Wrexham 60. Wrexham 61. Wrexham 62. Wrexham 63. Wrexham 64. Wrexham 65. Wrexham 66. Wrexham 67. Wrexham 68. Wrexham 69. Wrexham 70. Wrexham 71. Wrexham 72. Wrexham 73. Wrexham 74. Wrexham 75. Wrexham 76. Wrexham 77. Wrexham 78. Wrexham 79. Wrexham 80. Wrexham 81. 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RUGBY UNION

Stumbling start hinders Brittle's peace movement

By MARK SOUSTER

WHEN Cliff Brittle was elected chairman of the management board of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) in July, one of his first actions was to offer an olive branch to sceptical senior clubs who were unconvinced that his new regime at Twickenham would have their interests at heart. A meeting yesterday of the 24 Allied Dunbar Premiership sides, called at Brittle's behest, was unlikely to persuade them that progress was being made.

The gathering took place against a backdrop of dire warnings about the economic health of the game after the decision of one significant investor to pull out of the sport. John Beckwith has sold his £3 million investment in Harlequins to Duncan Saville, an Australian businessman. Beckwith has retained a 10 per cent stake while Saville has also paid another £1 million to the club to become its principal investor.

The RFU described the meeting yesterday as a bridge-building exercise, one in which Brittle, who was joined by Fran Cotton, reinforced his commitment to the clubs and pledged a closer relationship between the two sides. However, after a day of talks over a range of issues — among them money, television rights, the fixture list and player contracts — it was obvious that fundamental



Brittle olive branch

and possibly irreconcilable differences remain. "We've got two separate agendas," one chief executive said. "The bottom line is that the distrust is still there." The RFU, however, described the meeting as "productive".

The desire by the RFU to maintain divisional rugby keeps them at odds with the clubs, who want nothing of it. What they do want, and need, is more money to fund a professional game that is bleeding many dry, as Nigel Wray, the owner of Saracens, conceded yesterday.

Wray said that the clubs wanted the fixture list unravelled, a reduction in the number of pre-Christmas internationals and a condensed five nations' championship, in

order to make more Saturdays available for an expanded first division.

"The top clubs are being forced to shut down on nine lucrative Saturdays," Wray, who pledged his continued support to Saracens, said. "It is a crazy system and if we don't get it right, then all the leading clubs will go bust."

"We cannot, as a professional sport, limp along like this. No one in the game realised what kind of escalation in costs we would have to deal with. Obviously I regret my losses, but we could be in a healthy position in five years if we get the right leadership."

Collectively, the 12 first division clubs lost almost £15 million last year, much of it in paying the inflated wages of overseas players brought in to raise the profile of the sport. All parties agree that that cannot continue.

It is ironic, however, that Harlequins, who on Monday signed Zinzan Brooke, the New Zealand forward, on a lucrative contract to add to their polyglot squad, should be one of the first clubs to call for a cap on players' wages.

Guy Williams, the club's financial director, has pinpointed the salaries of foreign players as an area where money could be saved and perhaps invested in youth development, for which he said there was no long-term strategy. "The beneficiaries at the moment are the players coming from abroad at the peak of their maturity. Players know what their power is in demanding a higher salary and this has got out of control. I think this is to the detriment of rugby as a whole," he said.

There has to be a re-structured order to put a salary system agreed for the Heineken Cup quarter-finals. Otherwise, the situation where clubs in the first and second divisions will suffer greatly.

Such statements will almost certainly bring a knowing smile to the faces of Messrs Brittle and Cotton, who could be forgiven, perhaps, for saying: "We told you so."

Meanwhile, Brian Ashman, the Ireland coach, has suffered a setback in the build-up to the international against New Zealand in Dublin next month. David Corkery, the Bristol flanker, seems certain to miss the game after being seriously hurt during a freak training-ground accident.

Corkery suffered knee and ankle injuries when he was tackled by Craig Short, his back-row colleague, during a full-contact club session.

The former Cork Constitution player's kneecap dislocated on impact, and after falling awkwardly, he also sustained ankle ligament and tendon damage that should keep him out of rugby for at least six weeks.



Cardiff have offered Liam Botham, West Hartlepool's unsettled England Under-21 centre, a one-month trial. Botham, above, the son of Ian, the former England cricketer, trained with Cardiff yesterday and could feature when they resume their Welsh League premier division campaign

in two weeks' time. "We have not signed Liam, but the coaching staff will see how he fares," Peter Manning, the Cardiff team manager, said. Botham, 20, made just one league appearance for West Hartlepool, but relishes the new challenge. "It's a great opportunity and I'm looking forward to it."

Play-offs pitch Pontypridd towards return to Brive

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE complex qualification system agreed for the Heineken Cup quarter-finals throws up the serious possibility that Brive and Pontypridd will meet for a third time this season in the play-offs. Should that happen, three of the Pontypridd players, each of them implicated in the bar-room brawl that followed the first pool match last month, are legally disqualified from appearing in Brive.

Dale McIntosh, the Welsh club's No 8, was sent off during the game at the Stade Municipal on September 14 and has yet to face a charge brought by European Rugby Cup Ltd (ERC), the tournament organiser, of bringing the game into disrepute by his actions as he left the field. He, Phil John, the hooker, and André Barnard, the centre, were all involved in a brawl in a bar later that evening and an examining judge found the next day that they had a case to answer.

However, the French legal system also precludes individuals involved in such an examination — which could take anything up to six

months to conclude — from returning to the area. If Pontypridd have to play Brive for a place in the quarter-finals, they would have to apply for a legal exemption if they wished to field any one of the three players.

The first meeting of the clubs, which Brive won 32-31, included a brawl involving the majority of players on both sides that ended with the dismissal of McIntosh and Lionel Mallier, the Brive flanker. It was not the only violent incident and, when players from both sides encountered each other in the Toulouse bar later on, three internationals — Philippe Carbonneau, Christophe Lamaison and David Venditti — received injuries. Brive threatened not to play the return match at Sardis Road, but duly appeared on September 27 to share a 29-29 draw.

With the final round of pool matches to be played this weekend it is, at the moment, a hypothetical issue, but there is a strong possibility that, after the weekend, it will have become fact. If Treviso, the Italian club, lose in Pau and

Bourgoin lose in Cardiff (which, on form, both are likely to do), then Pontypridd will have the best record of the clubs placed third in any of the five groups.

The six teams for the play-offs comprise the five pool runners-up and the best-ranked team in third place. The six teams will be seeded according to: a) pool points; b) pool points difference; c) most pool tries; d) best disciplinary record. The leading three teams will have home advantage and team one will play team six, team two will be against team five and team three against team four.

If Brive come away victorious from their game with Scottish Borders, they would be the best of the teams placed second in any group and, as such, would be due to entertain Pontypridd in the play-offs over the weekend of November 1-2. If, however, Pontypridd were to win in Bath on Saturday, then Brive could take over the leadership of pool C and avoid any further strain on Franco-Welsh relationships. Sod's Law suggests otherwise.

All Blacks take steps to prevent burnout

By DAVID HANDS

THE burnout against which rugby's players and coaches have warned since the game accepted professionalism two years ago is catching up with the best team in the world: New Zealand. "It is getting to the stage where we've had players who have been relieved to be injured, just so they can get a break," John Mayhew said yesterday.

Mayhew, the team doctor to the All Blacks for most of this decade, cited the example of Auckland, who relinquished the Ranfurly Shield to Waikato last weekend. "They went through the Super 12 tournament, which they played and won, then had a lot of players with the All Blacks and now they're having to play in a tough national provincial championship [NPC]," he said.

It is all too easy to look at the hard core of the New Zealand side, the tight-five forwards, and believe them almost impervious to injury. But they are as vulnerable as any. Sean Fitzpatrick, their captain, required knee surgery after the international season ended with victory in the tri-nations championship. Some of his Auckland colleagues, 11 of whom have been involved with the All Blacks, may be rested while the semi-finals and final of the NPC are played.

The 36 players to tour Britain and Ireland next month will be named on Monday and John Hart, the All Blacks coach, has taken steps to ensure that they arrive refreshed, mentally and physically. The nine-match tour, beginning at Llanelli on November 8, includes internationals against England (two), Ireland and Wales.

"Players don't want to be injured, but mentally they just need to be away for a while," Mayhew said. "Next year, I think we have only seven tests and no end-of-year tour, and that will make it more bearable for the players." Mayhew was referring to the southern hemisphere summer, which precedes the 1999 World Cup.

It is not only New Zealand who will need rest and recuperation. Administrators from all the leading rugby-playing countries, some of them driven by the need to enhance valuable television contracts, have fallen into the trap of committing their players to too much representative rugby, at a time when clubs and provinces are starting to make conscious efforts to structure careers for their employees with rest periods.

England are well aware of the difficulty and only last week Cliff Brittle, chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board, warned against the over-exposure of leading players.

More than a hundred Australian players have been guaranteed minimum salaries of £25,000. A select squad of elite national team players will also benefit. "The agreement includes a clause guaranteeing full payment of contracts regardless of injury,"

IN BRIEF

Hornets try to ease Oldham's plight

ROCHDALE Hornets have put their ground at Oldham's disposal, in order to help save their stricken neighbours, whose shareholders are being urged to put the club into liquidation (Christopher Irvine writes).

"We don't want the Bears to die and they can come and play at Spodden for as long as they like, if it would help the situation," Ray Taylor, the Rochdale chairman, said. "Hopefully, a rescue package can be found."

St Helens are to redevelop Knowsley Road, after plans for a new stadium, near the M62, fell through because of a lack of funding.

Race dropped

Motor racing: The French Grand Prix has been omitted from the Formula One world championship calendar for next year after a dispute over television rights between the privately-owned company, TFI, and the French state channel, FR3. French officials had been hoping that a gap would be left in the calendar, allowing them to be added to the list once the dispute has been resolved.

Chasing record

Tennis: Lorna Woodroffe, of Surrey, leads the Great Britain team that will be seeking a record fifth successive victory over the United States in the Maureen Connolly Trophy in Manchester from October 23 to 25. Louise Latimer, of Warwickshire, Abigail Tordoff, of Kent, and Mandi Wainwright and Amanda Jones, both of Essex, complete the line-up.

Squad members

Rugby union: Argentina have named four English-based players in their squad for the Latin Cup competition later this month. They are Federico Mendez and German Llanes, both of Bath, and Agustín Pichot and Rolando Martín, both of Richmond. Argentina play France, Italy and Romania in France between October 18 and 26.

Smith fourth

Sailing: *Silk Cut* yesterday remained in fourth place in the Whitbread Round the World Race, despite having lost another three nautical miles to *Innovation Kvaerner*. Lawrie Smith were 142 miles adrift of the Norwegian leaders after rounding the island of Fernando de Noronha off the coast of Brazil.

Syed supreme

Table tennis: Matthew Syed, the English national champion, has moved above his main rival, Carl Prean, in the world rankings for the first time. Syed has risen to 37 from 38 while Prean has dropped four places to 38. Lisa Lomas, the England women's No 1, has slipped a place to 69.

SQUASH

Selectors strive to get squad balance right

By COLIN MCQUILLAN

THE opening fixture of the Squash Racquets Association (SRA) National League has highlighted the delicate managerial task of balancing strength in mixed-sex squads, as opposing professional schedules call upon the top players.

Mitsubishi Electric Potzers are pleased enough so far. Defending champions, they set the 1997-98 season in motion on Tuesday evening with a 5-0 win in group A over the newly-elected Itkley side. The match included a walk-over for their reserve fifth-string woman, Dominique Lloyd-Walter, the Middlesex junior listed instead of Sue Wright, the England No 2.

Wright, along with almost every other leading woman in the world, is in Australia preparing for the world open championship in Sydney next week. League fixtures over the next few weeks are likely to be similarly affected by the men's world championships in Malaysia next month and national open championships in various parts of the world.

"There is a greater depth in the men's ranks, of course," Brian Hargrave, the National League administrator, said. "An important gathering in the women's game tends to throw us back on sometimes untested reserves which, in Itkley's case, was complicated

by a flu virus that kept Kate Allison, the England No 19, in her bed when she should have been understudying Cassandra Jackson, the England No 1."

At one point, Hargrave's own squad at Duffield, in Derbyshire, looked likely to have personnel problems this season, having signed two ranking players, Jane Martin and Natalie Grainger, for the fifth string in group B. "I was really pleased to have such good cover until I discovered they would both be in Australia for my first match," he said.

Then he found that Jamie Thacker, 19, the England No 8, had, in deciding against an expensive trip to the world open, overlooked her need to secure a league tenure at home. "I signed her on the spot and I reckon it could make all the difference to our season."

Armourcoat Priory start their group A season tonight, away to Hallamshire, in Sheffield, with Zubair Jahan, the Pakistan No 2, leading the Birmingham-based squad and Pauline Nicholl, the durable England No 11, replacing Tracey Shenton as the fifth string.

Nicholl is a tough northern competitor who rarely travels far from her Newcastle base.

Results, page 44

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ROYAL AIR FORCE AIRMEN AIRCREW

Scrummage leaves them deeper in the mire

Having got off to a precarious start at the beginning of their first season as a professional rugby team, the players and managers of Bath Rugby Club (or, "Bath") as the team's new Roman heritage-obsessed marketing consultants would like us to add, "them") can draw some comfort from the fact that those first few weeks didn't turn out to be such an awful period after all. Not compared with the few weeks that followed them.

As the second instalment of *The Rugby Club* (BBC2) opens, Bath has just lost one match to Pontypriid. Taking the sort of executive decision that few executives make — the sort of decision that earns them the poshest car, and the best car-parking space to put it in — the club's newly appointed Executive Chairman, Ed Goodall, swiftly shoves all blame on to John Hall. Goodall's background is in greetings cards. Hall is the England-

capped, former Bath player who is now the team's director of rugby. Hall is speechless. If this was *Oprah*, there would be a caption under his face which read: "John Hall — burly rugby player who has only just realised that a rugby boot full in the face is a lot less painful than an executive knife in the back."

Any other business on the agenda for this board meeting — apart from setting up Hall as the patsy in case things go wrong? Yes, the new bosses want to change the name from "Bath Football Club" to "Bath Rugby", which sounds like a game you play while you're soaking in the tub at night: an up-and-under sort of game, maybe.

After the Pontypriid setback, they beat the French team Dax, and then Italy's Treviso. Bath captain, Phil de Glanville is made England captain, too. But then they lose against Cardiff, ending their hopes of triumph in Europe.

Or, as the club's new marketing consultants would probably put it: "Early Bath Rugby."

If the question "how could it happen?" was asked only of Bath's choppy 1996 season, our troubles would be small. But it was asked of Treblinka concentration camp. In Laurence Rees's horribly magnetic *The Nazis* (BBC2), "How could such places ever come to exist?"

Maybe they wouldn't have existed if Hitler hadn't convinced himself that even Jewish toddlers were helping to orchestrate a world conspiracy aimed at bringing Germany to its knees. Maybe they wouldn't have existed if Hitler hadn't had the idea of the "Final Solution" suggested, made by a German Foreign Office official in June 1940, to resettle all the Jews on a tropical island under the control of German police. Madagascar was proposed. *Madagascar!* It is almost

surreal to imagine hotel lobbies in Madagascar full of Jews in armchairs eating marble cake and watching the world go by, while trying to avoid going to the beach. But not as surreal as what actually happened to those same Jews. More than 99 per cent of those sent to Treblinka were murdered, mostly within three hours of arriving. But the Jews weren't always processed en masse. In the early

stages of the war, when the Nazis were pushing into the Soviet Union, Jews were simply rounded up and shot. But this began to upset Himmler, because killing at such close quarters was having a damaging psychological effect on his men: so he struggled to find a more humane method — humane for his men, not his victims. In the meantime, the Nazis took whatever help was offered. And, luckily for them, plenty was offered.

In the Baltic states the Nazis found plenty of collaborators willing to help them to pull the trigger, men who were as biased about killing children — hundreds of children every day — as the Nazis. Men such as Petras Zetkionka, a Lithuanian member of a Nazi killing squad: "We would shoot them, give them up as lost, and that was it."

After years of watching documentaries on Nazis, we thought we had viewed every inch of archive

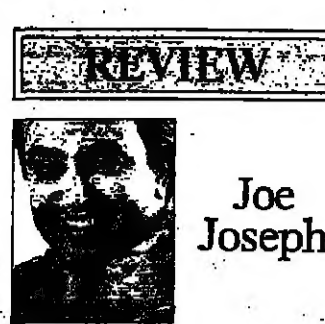
footage and seen every surviving witness interviewed. But Rees always finds someone new to chill our bones. So tell us Petras, why did you kill innocent children, who had never been Communists? "How should I put it to you? It's a kind of curiosity. You just pull the trigger, he falls, and that's it."

Y ouch to call such killers animals, but animals are actually more respectable. They kill for food. As Nathaniel Moore, a 12-year-old American who barely survived an attack by a mountain lion, told us in *Animal People* (BBC1), "I don't hate mountain lions. I was just hungry and attacked me... it's part of nature."

Mountain lions are apparently becoming common sights in American backyards, often looting off with the family dog. It was thought they were scared of humans, but then one pounced on a Californian

schoolteacher in a San Diego park and killed her. I'd have felt more scared if it hadn't been Peter Sissons doing the narrating on this show. It made the whole thing sound like an item on the *Nine O'Clock News*. I kept expecting Sissons to cut away to "our chief political correspondent, John Sergeant, over in Westminster", who would be buttonholing ministers about what they planned to do about the potential mountain-lion threat to the British people.

Tony Blair: "We were brave enough to tame the wilder excesses of the Labour Party and we will now tame the wilder excesses of the mountain lion. Let nobody be in any doubt. The British people voted for change, not for mountain lions. As on May 1, it is a battle of fear against hope. And, as on May 1, hope will win. We are entering a giving age, and we are going to give mountain lions something they'll never forget: John Prescott."



Joe Joseph

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (88847)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (73270033)
- 9.05am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (7355287)
- 9.55 Style Challenge (873737)
- 9.55 Kilroy (7355282)
- 10.35 Conservative Party Conference '97: Debates on the economy and health and social security (72743083)
- 12.35pm Going for a Song: Sheridan Morley and Perry Smith brush up on juggling (88847)
- 1.00pm One O'Clock News (735084)
- 1.30pm Regional News and weather (73746335)
- 1.40 The Weather Show (4693538)
- 1.45 Neighbours: Marlene wishes she could turn back the clock when her meddling backbite (73462847)
- 2.10pm Golf: World Matchplay Steve Rider introduces coverage of the World Matchplay Championship from Wetherby (491815)
- 3.30pm Funnies: 3.35 Playdays (8107644) 3.55 The Silver Brumby (731480) 4.20 Mr Wym (805731) 4.35 Smart: accidental watercolours, storage containers and fuzzy portraits (8910538)
- 5.00pm Newsround (7284977)
- 5.10pm Byker Grove: Terrace backs up courage (7388302)
- 5.35pm Neighbours (7357731)
- 6.00pm Six O'Clock News (7354)
- 6.30pm Regional News (606)
- 7.00pm Watchdog with Anne Robinson: Consumer magazine, also with Alice Beer, Liz Kershaw, Jonathan Maitland, John Nicholson and Andy Webb (731880)
- 7.30pm EastEnders: Devastating news about what's happened to little Billy sends shockwaves through the Square; Sarah and Joe sun Lorraine and Irene again (73118)
- 8.00pm Animal Hospital: Steve Knight meets a lost sealard which needs a guiding hand to find its way back to the coast (73828)
- 8.30pm Dad: Comedy, starring George Cole and Kevin McNally (73535)
- 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News (73515)
- 9.30pm The Lookalike (3/5) As Carla's condition deteriorates, Roland surmises that his professional skills could go one step further than deterring a villain. Drama, starring Warren Clarke (506793)
- 10.20pm Clive Anderson: All Talk with the actor, comedian and author Stephen Fry (7326064)
- 11.00pm Question Time: Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, Conservative whip, chairman Archie Norman and Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman Menzies Campbell (53441)
- 12.00pm Golf: Steve Rider introduces highlights from today's play in the World Matchplay Championship from Wetherby. With commentary by Peter Allis, Alex Hey, and Dave Marr (5018318)
- 12.40pm Street War (1952) With Play Sherry and Mario Van Peebles. Fact-based, fictionalised about a bloody conflict between rival drug gangs on the streets of Brooklyn. Directed by Dick Lowy (343855)
- 2.10pm Newsnight (855213)

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BBC2

- 6.00am Science: The Chemistry of Creation (53588) 6.30pm Why Me? Why Not? (47915) 7.00pm See Hear Me! News (7378644)
- 7.15pm Teletubbies (7352054) 7.40pm Smurfs: Adventures (7348731) 8.05pm Blue Peter (731731) 8.30pm Johnson and Friends (7353880) 8.40pm Mouse and Mole (7352827) 8.45pm Harry and the Hendersons (7317511)
- 9.10pm Numberline (3602265) 9.25pm Megamaths (7320335) 9.45pm Come Outside (8798712) 10.00pm Teletubbies (53587) 10.30pm Storytime (8841625) 10.45pm The Experimenter (7625847) 11.05pm Space Ark (7357323) 11.15pm 21st Century (5479731) 11.35pm English File (3284847) 11.55pm Lifeschool (3695335) 12.25pm Showcase (8251257)
- 12.30pm Working Lunch (37441) 1.00pm Barney (735180422) 1.05pm Monty (73518793) 1.10pm Countryside (7718335) 2.10pm News (7744022)
- 2.15pm Conservative Party Conference '97: Jon Sopel and Diana Madoff present live coverage from Blackpool (814977) 3.35pm News (73188070)
- 4.00pm Golf: World Matchplay Action from Wetherby (491815)
- 5.30pm Today's the Day (593)
- 6.00pm Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Lwaxana Truitt to Odo (7325338)
- 6.45pm Conference Talk (731770)
- 7.30pm Lancelotti: Parallels between Eurocommunism and the country's fight with Napoleon; Italy's football roots are traced back to 1900s Britain (460)
- 8.00pm The Whitehead: A report on the yacht race (8170) WALES: Franco and Friends (73118)
- 8.30pm Test-driver Clarkson (8330pm)
- 8.50pm Top Gear: Jeremy Clarkson test-drives the latest off-roader from Land Rover: the gimmick-laden, colour co-ordinated Range Rover Autobiography (734977)
- 9.00pm Third Rock from the Sun: Dick quits the university on a matter of principle in the mistaken belief that he'll be welcomed back with open arms (7387712)
- 9.25pm Horizon: A virus that works on antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria (7318147)
- 10.15pm 10x10 (7356225)
- 10.30pm Newsnight (7350273)
- 11.15pm Late Review (220441) 11.55pm Weather (730422) 12.00pm A Day in the Life of (23774)
- 12.30pm Learning Zone: The Making of Bill Oddie (5562128) 12.35pm Wildlife: Patterns in Green (4583300) 1.00pm Reindeer in the Arctic (31231) 1.30pm Listening in the Dark (13958) 2.00pm Mental Health and Community Care (84039) 2.00pm Teaching Film and Media (47391) 5.00pm Teacher Training: Basic Skills (89478) 5.30pm Understanding Dyslexia (24403)

BBC2

- 6.00am GMTV (4100286)
- 9.25pm Supermarket Sweep (73044151)
- 9.55pm Regional News (7581426)
- 10.00pm The Time, the Place (25793)
- 10.30pm This Morning (73772793)
- 12.20pm Regional News (8246753)
- 12.30pm News (735084)
- 12.55pm Shortland Street (5673335)
- 1.25pm Home and Away: Alan is suspicious of Justin's new boyfriend Danny (7303542)
- 1.50pm Remote Control Cooking (7343880)
- 2.20pm Vanessa (734651354)
- 2.50pm The Natural Health Show: Treatments for circulation problems (4283002)
- 3.30pm News (4089033)
- 3.25pm Regional News and weather (4088354)
- 3.30pm Potomac Park (8102915) 3.40pm Wizards (885285) 3.50pm Kipper (804170) 4.00pm The Adventures of David (5587335)
- 4.15pm Hey Arnold! (7359712) 4.40pm Animal Ark (7354862)
- 5.10pm A Country Practice (3074915) Followed by Crimestoppers
- 5.40pm News (735084)
- 6.00pm Home and Away (7315606)
- 6.25pm Regional News (867460)
- 6.30pm WALES: Wales Tonight (731842)
- 6.30pm The West Tonight (731842)
- 7.00pm Enniskillen: Sarah is shocked to find Billy has lost his job (73248)
- 7.30pm The Big Sky: Dermot Murnaghan compares the latest issues to fight drug crime in America and Britain (258)
- 8.00pm The Bill: Boulton finds himself playing councillor to save a marriage (73296)
- 8.30pm Clive James on TV: A fond look at the world of costume drama (4731)
- 9.00pm The Uninvited Blake and Melissa find an ally. With Leslie Grantham (3/4) (73202)
- 10.00pm News at Ten (735084)
- 10.30pm Regional News and weather (388441)
- 10.40pm WALES: The Ferret (25608)
- 10.40pm The West This Week (73354)
- 11.15pm WALES: Celtic Fists (7316712)
- 11.30pm Justice Frame (7334809)
- 11.45pm Swift Justice (747557)
- 11.55pm WALES: The Big Story (711373)
- 12.00pm The LADS (734478)
- 1.15pm Family Business (37519)
- 1.45pm Ed's Night Party (782120)
- 2.10pm Late and Loud (201687)
- 2.30pm Waterlilies (73194774)
- 3.35pm The Good Sex Guide Late (7325512)
- 4.35pm The Time, the Place (7323455)
- 5.00pm WALES: Garden Calendar (51132)
- 5.30pm News (28225)

HTV

- As HTV West except:
- 12.55pm-1.25pm A Country Practice (5673335)
- 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (3074915)
- 6.25pm Central News (323625)
- 6.55-7.00pm Lineup (456712)
- 10.40pm Lords of the Ring: Boxing action introduced by Gary Newbon. The commentators are Reg Gutteridge and Jim Watt (477002)
- 11.40pm Rede in Europe (30348)
- 12.40pm Funny Business (1084045)
- 1.10pm Planet Mirth (567571)
- 1.40pm Rockman (2207671)
- 2.35pm God's Gift (8012958)
- 3.30pm Late and Loud (262519)
- 4.25pm Central Jobfinder '97 (7151039)
- 5.20pm Asian Eye (7115010)
- As HTV West except:
- 12.20pm-12.30pm Illuminations (8248793)
- 12.55pm Home and Away (3145793)
- 1.20-1.50pm Emmerdale (46731248)
- 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (3074915)
- 6.00-7.00pm Westcountry News with Alison Johns and John Andrews (48286)
- 10.30pm Westcountry News (377793)
- 10.45pm On the Edge: Investigative current affairs series narrated by Jose Ackland (323731)
- 11.15pm Power Game: A report from the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool (320644)
- 11.45pm Prisoner Cell Block H (747557)
- As HTV West except:
- 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (3074915)
- 6.00pm Meridian Tonight (422)
- 6.30-7.00pm Big Day Out (642)
- 10.30pm Meridian News and Weather (377793)
- 10.45pm Unresolved (323731)
- 11.15pm A406 (320644)
- 11.45pm Highlander (747557)
- 5.00pm Freetime (51132)
- As HTV West except:
- 12.19pm Anglia Air Watch (8267828)
- 12.55-1.25pm A Country Practice (5673335)
- 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street (3074915)
- 6.25pm Anglia Weather (865489)
- 6.25pm Anglia News (323625)
- 6.55-7.00pm What's On (456712)
- 10.29pm Anglia Air Watch (702825)
- 10.40pm Cover Story Crime Special (804986)
- 11.10pm Stratosphere (741354)
- 11.40pm Pulp: A Feeling Called Live (878712)
- Starts: 7.00pm The Big Breakfast (76915)
- 9.00pm Yagellion (32502) 11.30pm Here's One I Made Earlier (2118) 11.40pm Sesame Street (4757) 12.30pm Ricki Lake (3808) 1.00pm Sport Metformin (32510248) 1.15pm Will Clegg Clegg (3253731) 1.30pm Film: Desires (2460) 3.30pm Collector's Lot (880) 4.00pm Fifteen-to-One (915) 4.30pm The Lonely Planet (195) 5.00pm Pulp (456) 5.30pm Countdown (151) 5.50pm Newsnight (77422) 6.15pm News (49107) 7.00pm Pulp (456) 7.30pm Pulp (456) 7.55pm Pulp (456) 8.30pm Pulp (456) 8.55pm Pulp (456) 9.30pm Pulp (456) 9.55pm Pulp (456) 10.30pm Pulp (456) 10.55pm Pulp (456) 11.30pm Pulp (456) 11.55pm Pulp (456) 12.30pm Pulp (456) 12.55pm Pulp (456) 1.00pm Pulp (456) 1.25pm Pulp (456) 1.50pm Pulp (456) 2.00pm Pulp (456) 2.25pm Pulp (456) 2.50pm Pulp (456) 3.00pm Pulp (456) 3.25pm Pulp (456) 3.50pm Pulp (456) 4.00pm Pulp (456) 4.25pm Pulp (456) 4.50pm Pulp (456) 5.00pm Pulp (456) 5.25pm Pulp (456) 5.50pm Pulp (456) 6.00pm Pulp (456) 6.25pm Pulp (456) 6.50pm Pulp (456) 7.00pm Pulp (456) 7.25pm Pulp (456) 7.50pm 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